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ELBERT HUBBARD

**AS IT SEEMS TO ME:  Being
some Philistine Essays concerning
Several Things, by Elbert Hubbard**

18



**DONE INTO A BOOK AT THE ROYCROFT
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BY RULE OF THREE



AS IT SEEMS TO ME

I.

BY RULE OF THREE.



SOME years ago at College I read, on compulsion, a book on Rhetoric. Reasons were to me then as plenty as blackberries, and I recollect that on examination my answers given to ♣ this, that and the other were so glib and trite, and my thesis so amusing,

that I carried off a Prize. But during the struggle for prizes that have a value as collateral, the Prize and the Rhetoric were forgotten. Yet Fate decreed it so, and one day last week I met a Harvard youth, whose ambition was Literature, and he was in the grinding turmoil of a Volume. He was studying on compulsion, with intent to work off a Condition, and the book he was reading with such violence was the Rhetoric of my College days. With a flush of pride it came to me that I was a Prizeman, and I offered, out of the goodness of my heart, to tutor the youth, so that after five lessons of an hour each he could grind the Condition to powder.

To prove my fitness, the young man put me through a slight quiz, and alas! all of the beautiful truths and facts of the Rhetoric had slipped me, save this alone: "The three requisites in correct writing are Clearness, Force and Elegance."

♣ Professor Adams Sherman Hill, who wrote the Rhetoric, begins every address with this peculiar formula. Mr. Barrett Wendell, Heir-Apparent to his ideas and Chair, does the same; and the Shock-

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headed Youth, who occupies the same relation to the professorship that the infant Duke of York does to the throne of England, always settles himself in his seat with his elbows on the table, coughs gently, and prefaces his lecture by saying to the admiring Freshmen: "Gentlemen, the three requisites in correct writing are Clearness, Force and Elegance."

Prof. Hill has in one book, by actual count, twenty-seven different propositions that he divides into three parts. I have forgotten them all, save the one just named. This statement I never can forget. I hold it with a deathless grasp that defies the seasons and sorrows of time; for there are things burned so deeply into one's soul that the brand can never be removed; and should reason abdicate, I'll gibber through the grates of my padded cell at each pitying passer-by, "The three requisites in correct writing are Clearness, Force and Elegance." ❧❧❧

For years I have repeated this fetching formula on every possible occasion; and up to this date I have managed to drown the rising voice of conscience by the specious plea that a double standard of truth is justifiable in the present condition of society. ❧ In morals I have been a bimetalist.

But after again reading "On Compromise," by John Morley, I am convinced that this juggling with the Eternal Verities is what has kept the race in darkness these many cycles; and I now admit the truth which I have long withheld, that Professor Hill's three requisites are gross humbuggery. I boldly state that Professor Hill does not know what the "requisites" are; and I am sure that I do not. In fact I am looking for them anxiously; and should I ever find them, I'll do as Shakespeare did—keep them to myself. I say further that inasmuch as Professor Hill does not

know them, the Heir-Apparent and the Shock-headed Youth in the rush-line for the Chair cannot possibly be expected to know : so none of us know.

Not only is Professor Hill's formula rank error, but it is in direct opposition to truth. I bundle his crass creed with Dr. Hall's Universal Self-Treatment, Professor Loissette's Scheme of Mnemonics, and the Brown-Sequard Recipe for Perpetual Youth.

Professor Hill, with the help of his students, has compiled three books on Rhetoric ; Mr. Barrett Wendell has published two. Students at Harvard are expected to buy these books. There are three thousand students at Harvard. These various books are practically one, for they all teach that "a parenthetical remark must be enclosed in parentheses, dashes or commas," and that "every sentence should have at least one verb." These things are explained to men who have had ten years of solid schooling in order to fit them for college. Professor Hill recommends Harvard students to buy "that well-written work on Composition by Mr. Barrett Wendell," ♣ and Mr. Wendell modestly says, on page 8, line 18, of his biggest well-written work : "Professor Hill's books are the most sensible treatment of the art of composition that I have yet found in print."

The last three chapters in Mr. Wendell's well-written work bear the following startling titles, respectively : "Clearness," "Force" and "Elegance." ♣ Harvard Freshmen know Trigonometry, Physics and "one language besides English," and various other things, but it is left for Professor Hill to sell them a book which explains that "a sentence may end either with a period, interrogation point or an exclamation mark!" Do you say that the public school system is to blame for such a condition? My answer is that if

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Harvard required her students to know the simple rules of Rhetoric before being admitted to the University, it would be done ~~and~~

Mr. Hill fills the Boylston Professorship of Literature and Oratory at Harvard University, but with all the many thousand students who have been under his care he has probably never given impulse to a single orator, nor materially assisted one man with literary ambition. The reason is that he is teaching things that should have been known to his pupils years before. There is a time to teach things as well as a way. Instead of arousing animation, Professor Hill reduces it: so sympathy is made a weakling and imagination rendered wingless. I have examined many compositions written by Harvard students, and they average up about like the epistles of little girls who write letters to Santa Claus. The students are all right—fine intelligent young fellows, most of them, although some of course have been “sent” to College—but the conditions under which they work are such that they are robbed of all spontaneity when they attempt to express themselves. Of course I know that a few Harvard men have succeeded in Oratory and Literature, for there are those so strong that even Cambridge cannot kill their personality, nor a Professor reduce to neutral salts their native vim. The rules of Rhetoric should be taught to adolescence; then when the boy goes to college he has tools with which to work. “When did you learn your letters?” I asked a six-year-old youngster yesterday. “I allus know’d ‘em,” was the reply. And the answer was wise, for the kindergarten methods teach the child to read, and he never knows when or how he acquired the knowledge. As a healthy man does not know he has a stomach, so he should write

without knowing a single so-called rule. And as the Froebel methods are fast making their way in all departments of learning, I expect this will soon be so. But the colleges lag behind, and Harvard (very busy fighting "Co-Ed—") still tries to make statues by clapping the material on the outside ❀

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Professor Hill knows the futility of his methods, for in his last work he puts in several disclaimers to the effect that he "does not undertake to supply men with ideas." That confession of weakness is pitiful. Professor Hill should surround his students with an atmosphere that makes thought possible. By liberating the imagination of his pupils ideas would come to them. But as fire will not burn without oxygen, so thought cannot exist in the presence of Mr. Barrett Wendell. Both he and his superior are strong in way of supplying cold storage—that's all.

In lecturing on Literature and Oratory these gentlemen sit at a desk. And often, becoming weary, they sprawl over the table like a devil-fish seeking its prey. This, I believe, is the usual Cambridge method. But there is one exception to this rule at Harvard, and that is Professor Kittredge, who cannot sit still, and so paces the platform and shoots the lecture over his shoulder. When a student is called on to recite, Professor Kittredge often opens a box of withering sarcasm that acts like chlorine gas on the poor fellow who is on his feet. But it makes the rest of the class grin like death's-heads ❀ Harvard knows no general plan for cultivating the imagination, inciting animation, or furthering ambition. All is suppression, fear; and this repression often finds vent in rowdiness outside of Harvard Yard. The seven youths who, under Professor Hill, mark the themes, hunt only for errors and lapses. The tendency of this

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negation is intellectual torpor and spiritual death. If any one should ask Mr. Barrett Wendell what he thought of the Herbartian idea of developing the God within, the Assistant-Professor would first calmly light a cigarette; then after blowing the smoke through his nose, would fix on his presumptuous interlocutor an Antarctic stare that would freeze him stiff.



AND let me say right here that toward Harvard's teachers I bear no malice. In showing Professor Hill's books to be puerile and profitless, and in depositing the Heir-Apparent in the ragbag of oblivion, I have no sinister motive. And if from this time forward their names are a byword and a hissing, it is only because the Institution which they serve has stood in the way of Eternal Truth. These professors of rhetoric prospecting on the mountain side, thinking they had found the Final Word, builded tabernacles and rested—all forgetful of the avalanche.

"Clearness" is never found in literature of the first class. Clearness, according to the Professor, means a simplicity that makes the meaning plain to all others. But this is only pabulum for the sophomore intellect; and outside of Bryant & Stratton's has no legitimate place. The great writer is clear only to himself or those as great as he.

The masterpieces of Art are all cloud-capped. Few men indeed ever reach the summit: we watch them as they ascend and lose them in the mists as they climb: sometimes they never come back to us, and even if they do, having been on the Mount of Transfiguration, they are no longer ours.

In all great literature there is this large, airy imper-

sonal independence. The Mountain does not go to you : you may famish out there on the arid plain and your bones whiten amid the alkali in the glistening sun, but the majestic Mountain looks on imperturbable. The valleys are there, with the rich verdure, and the running brooks where the trout frolic, and the cool springs where wild game gathers, but what cares the Mountain for you ! Ecclesiastes offers no premiums to readers ; Shakespeare makes no appeal to club raisers ; Emerson puts forth no hot endeavor for a million subscribers : all these can do without you *~ ~ ~*

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Rich lodes run through this Mountain, and we continually delve and toil for treasure. And in spite of the pain and isolation and the privation that is incident, and the dangerous crevasses that lie in wait, we secure a reward for our labor. Still we do not find the fabled "pockets" that we seek—it is always something else ☸ From Columbus searching for a Northwest Passage, to the rustic swain who follows with such fidelity the wake of a petticoat, all are the sport of Fate. We achieve, but die in ignorance of the extent to which we have benefitted the Race. And like the man who rode the hobby all his life, and whose friends discovered after he was dead that it was a real horse and had carried the man many long miles, so are we carried on steeds that are guided by an Unseen Hand.

All sublime Art is symbolic. What is the message the great violinist brings you ? Ah, you cannot impart it ! Each must hear it for himself. The note that is "clear" to all is not Art ☸ When Charles Lamb pointed to the row of ledgers in the office of the East India Company and said, "These are my works," he was only joking ; for he afterward ex-

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plained that ledgers, indices, catalogues, directories, almanacs, reports and briefs are not literature at all. These things inspire no poems; they give no glow.

♣ The province of Art is not to present a specific message, but to impart a feeling. If we go home from the Lyceum hushed, treading on air, we have heard Oratory, even though we cannot recall a single sentence; and if we read a poem that brings the unbidden tears and makes the room seem a sacred chancel, we have read Literature. The Master has imparted to our spirits a tithe of his own sublimity of soul ♣ For the good old ladies who prick the Bible for a message I have a profound sympathy: the Sacred Page fits man's every mood, and this is why it is immortal. That which is clear is ephemeral. Symbolism requires interpreters, and lo! colleges spring up with no other intent than to train men to explain a Book; for the Saviours of the world all speak in parables. They see the significance of Things and voice a various language. The interpreter makes the symbolist immortal, and the symbolist makes the fame of the interpreter ♣ If Turner had been "clear," Ruskin might still be Assistant-Professor. All Holy Writ from Moses to Browning is mystical. The writer has breathed into its nostrils the breath of life, that impalpable, elusive Something which we forever seek and which forever escapes us.

Of course, I would not have a writer endeavor to be mystical—this would be positively base; but I would have each man who feels that he has something to say, express himself in his own way, without let, hindrance, or injunction from writers on rhetoric, who, having never produced anything to speak of themselves, yet are willing for a consideration to show others how

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HAT do you do when you are preaching and can't think of anything to say?" asked a Fledgeling of his Pastor.

"I just holler," was the answer of the experienced Exhorter ☞

With half a million preachers in the United States, with families to keep on an average salary of five hundred dollars, I do not blame them for "holler-in"; neither do I censure editors who have to fill three columns each day if they often "holler:" as an economist I might advise a man to "holler," but as a lover of literature I cannot conscientiously do so.

☞ I have a clerical friend who, being much before the public, is often called upon unexpectedly to reduce moral calculi. Being a man of force, and not a man of power, he never says, "I do not know," but always boldly faces the problem after this manner: "My friends, this subject naturally divides itself under three heads: firstly," Here he states some general commonplace for the first head, and casts about in his mind for the other two; having secured them, he launches forth with much emphasis on some other theme and carries all before him. His swashing and marshal manner makes him everywhere a great success; he is considered one of the most prodigious men in his denomination.

And I am fully convinced that a painstaking show of system is one of the first essentials in making a favorable impression. We are like the Hebrew salesman who called on a firm that occupied a sixth floor, and who, on starting to show his samples, was promptly kicked down stairs; having arrived at the first landing a second man took him in hand and kicked him one flight further; this was continued until his battered form reached the sidewalk, when

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he picked himself up and admiringly exclaimed, "Mein Gott! vot a system!" So when a rhetorician flashes his "heads" and "divisions" and syllogisms and analyses and figures (that do not lie) upon us, we are so lost in bedazzled admiration that we can only lift up our hands and say, "My God! what a system!"

Good work never comes from the effort to be "clear" or "forceful" or "elegant." Clear to whom, forsooth? and as for force, it has no more place in letters than has speed.

Power in Art there surely is, but power is quite a different thing from force. Power is that quality by which change is wrought; it means potentiality, potency. The artist uses only a fraction of his power, and works his changes by the powder that he never explodes; while force means movement, action, exertion, violence, compulsion.

Literature is largely the result of feeling. The "hustler" is a man of force; very, very seldom is he a man of power; still rarer is it that he is a man of feeling. The very idea of force precludes tender sensibility and delicate emotion. If I should write on a scrap of paper, "Hate is death, but love is life," and drop the slip into the street, there might be power in the words, but surely there is no force. And as for elegance, let him who attempts it leave all hope behind; he is already damned. The elegance of an act must spring unconsciously from the gracious soul within. There is no recipe.

In letters, "clearness" should be left to the maker of directories, "force" to the auctioneer, and "elegance" to the young man who presides at the button counter. Were I an instructor in a Commercial College, I might advise that in business correspondence

there should be clearness and force and elegance; but if I were a Professor of Literature and Oratory, I would not smother inspiration in a formula. I would say, Cultivate the heart and intellect, and allow nature to do the rest. For while it is still a mooted question whether a man's offspring after the flesh are heirs to his mental and spiritual qualities, it is very sure that the children of his brain are partakers in whatsoever virtue that his soul possesses.

The teacher who teaches best is not he who insists on our memorizing rules, but he who produces in the pupil a pleasurable animation. We learn only in moments of joy and times of grief. The teacher who can give his pupils pleasure in their work shall be crowned with laurel, but grief—grief is the unwelcome gift of the gods alone! *N*

Let the writer have a vivid conception and then express it so it is at the moment clear to his Other-Self—that Self which looks on over the shoulder of every man, endorsing or censuring his every act and thought and deed. The highest reward of good work consists in the approbation of this Other-Self, and in that alone; even though the world flouts it all, you have not failed. "I know what pleasure is," said Stevenson, "for I have done good work."

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**THE CONFESSIO²NAL
IN LETTERS**



II.

THE CONFESSIONAL IN LETTERS.

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DURING the year 1848 Ralph Waldo Emerson of Concord, Mass., made a lecturing tour through England. Among the towns he visited was Coventry, where he was entertained at the residence of Mr. Charles Bray. In the family of Mr. Bray lived a young woman by the name of Mary Ann Evans, and although this Miss Evans was not handsome, either in face or figure, she made a decided impression on Mr. Emerson of Concord.

A little excursion was arranged to Stratford, an antiquated town of some note in the same county. On this trip Mr. Emerson and Miss Evans paired off very naturally, and Miss Evans of Coventry was so bold as to set Mr. Emerson of Concord straight on several matters relating to Mr. Shakespeare, formerly of Stratford.

"What is your favorite book?" said Mr. Emerson to Miss Evans, somewhat abruptly.

"Rousseau's 'Confessions,'" said the young woman instantly.

"And so it is mine," answered Mr. Emerson.

All of which is related by Moncure D. Conway in a volume entitled, "Emerson at Home and Abroad."

A copy of Conway's book was sent to Walt Whitman, and when he read the passage to which I have just referred he remarked, "And so it is mine."

Emerson and Whitman are probably the two strongest names in American letters, and George Eliot stands first among women writers of all time; and as they in common with many Lesser Wits stand

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side by side and salute Jean Jacques Rousseau, it may be worth our while to take just a glance at M. Rousseau's book in order, if we can, to know why it appeals to people of worth ☉


The first thing about the volume that attracts is the title. There is something charmingly alluring and sweetly seductive in a confession. Mr. Henry James has said : " The sweetest experience that can come to a man on his pilgrimage through this vale of tears is to have a lovely woman ' confess ' to him ; and it is said that while neither argument, threat, plea of justification, nor gold can fully placate a woman who believes she has been wronged by a man, yet she speedily produces, not only a branch, but a whole olive tree when he comes humbly home and confesses." ❧


Now here is a man about to 'fess to the world, and we take up the volume, glance around to see if any one is looking, and begin at the first paragraph to read:


❧ " I purpose an undertaking that never had an example and the execution of which will never have an imitation. I would exhibit myself to all men as I am—a man.

" Let the last trumpet sound when it will, I will come, with this book in my hand, and present myself before the Sovereign Judge. I will boldly proclaim : Thus have I acted, thus have I thought, such was I. With equal frankness have I disclosed the good and the evil. I have omitted nothing bad, added nothing good. I have exhibited myself, despicable and vile when so ; virtuous, generous, sublime when so. I have unveiled my interior being as Thou, Eternal One, hast seen it."

Now where is the man or woman who could stop there, even though the cows were in the corn ?

And as we read further we find things that are "unfit for publication" and confessions of sensations that are so universal to healthy folks that they are irrelevant, and straightway we arise and lock the door so as to finish the chapter undisturbed. For as superfluous things are the things we cannot do without, so is the irrelevant in literature the necessary. Having finished this chapter, oblivious to calls that dinner is waiting, we begin the next; and finding items so interesting that they are disgusting, and others so indecent that they are entertaining, we forget the dinner that is getting cold and read on 

And the reason we read on is not because we love the indecent, or because we crave the disgusting, although I believe Burke hints at the contrary, but simply because the writing down of these unbecoming things convinces us that the man is honest and that the confession is genuine. In short we come to the conclusion that any man who deliberately puts himself in such a bad light—caring not a fig either for our approbation or our censure—is no sham 

And there you have it! We want honesty in literature. The great orator always shows a dash of indifference for the opinions of his auditors; and the great writer is he who loses self-consciousness and writes himself down as he is, for at the last analysis all literature is a confession 

The millionaires of Maine and the men of Philadelphia sailing successward, purveying culture by the ton and issuing magazines that burden the mails, study very carefully the public palate. They know full well that a "confession" is salacious: it is an exposure. A confession implies something that is peculiar, private and distinctly different from that which we are used to. It is a removing the veil, a making plain

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things that are thought and performed in secret. And so we see articles on "The Women Who Have Influenced Me," "The Books that Have Made Me," "My Literary Passions," etc. But like the circus bills, these titles call for animals that the big tent never shows; and this perhaps is well, for otherwise 'twould fright the ladies ~~and~~

Yes, I frankly admit that these "confessions" suit the quilting-bee constituency of Mr. Bok better than the truth; and the fact of the writers practicing careful concealment of the truth that they have hands, senses, eyes, ears, organs, dimensions, passions, is a wise commercial stroke. You can prick them and they do not bleed, tickle them and they do not laugh, poison them and they do not die; simply because they are only puppets parading as certain virtues, and these virtues the own particular brand in which the subscribers delight.

That excellent publication, "The Forum," increased its circulation by many thousand when it ran a series of confessions of great men wherein these great men made sham pretense of laying their lives bare before the public gaze. Nothing was told that did not rebound to the credit of the confessor. The "Formative Influences" of sin, error and blunders were carefully concealed or calmly waived. The lack of good faith was as apparent in these articles as the rouge on the cheek of a courtesan: the color is genuine and the woman not dead, that's all.

♣ And the loss lies in this: These writers--mostly able men--sell their souls for a price, and produce a literature that lives the length of life of a moth, whereas they might write for immortality. Instead of inspiring the great, they act as clowns to entertain the groundlings ♪

Of course I know that Rousseau's "Confessions," Amiel's "Journal" and Marie Bashkirtseff's "Diary" have all been declared carefully worked out artifices. And admitting all the wonderful things that scheming man can perform, I still maintain that there are a few things that life and nature will continue to perform in the old, old way. I appeal to those who have tried both plans, whether it is not easier to tell the truth than concoct a lie. And I assiduously maintain that if the case is to be tried by a jury of Discerning Persons, that the shocking facts will serve the end far better than suggested half-truth.

When Richard Le Gallienne tells us of the birth of his baby and for weeks before how White Soul was sure she should die; and Marie Bashkirtseff makes painstaking note of the size of her hips and the development of her bust; and poor Amiel bewails the fate of eating breakfast facing an empty chair; and Rousseau explains the delicate sensations and smells that swept over him on opening his wardrobe and finding smocks and petticoats hanging in careless negligence amid his man's clothes; and all those other pathetic, foolish, charming, irrelevant bits of prattle, one is convinced of the author's honesty. No thorough-going literary man, hot for success, would leave such stuff in; he would as soon think of taking a bath in a horse trough on the public street; these are his own private affairs—his good sense would forbid. A good lie for its own sake is ever pleasing to honest men; we also respect a discreet silence, but a patched up, carefully explained record will not go. And when such small men as "Mr. S. Pepys" and James Boswell can write immortal books, the moral for the rest of us is that a little honesty is not a dangerous thing. And so I swing back to the place of beginning and

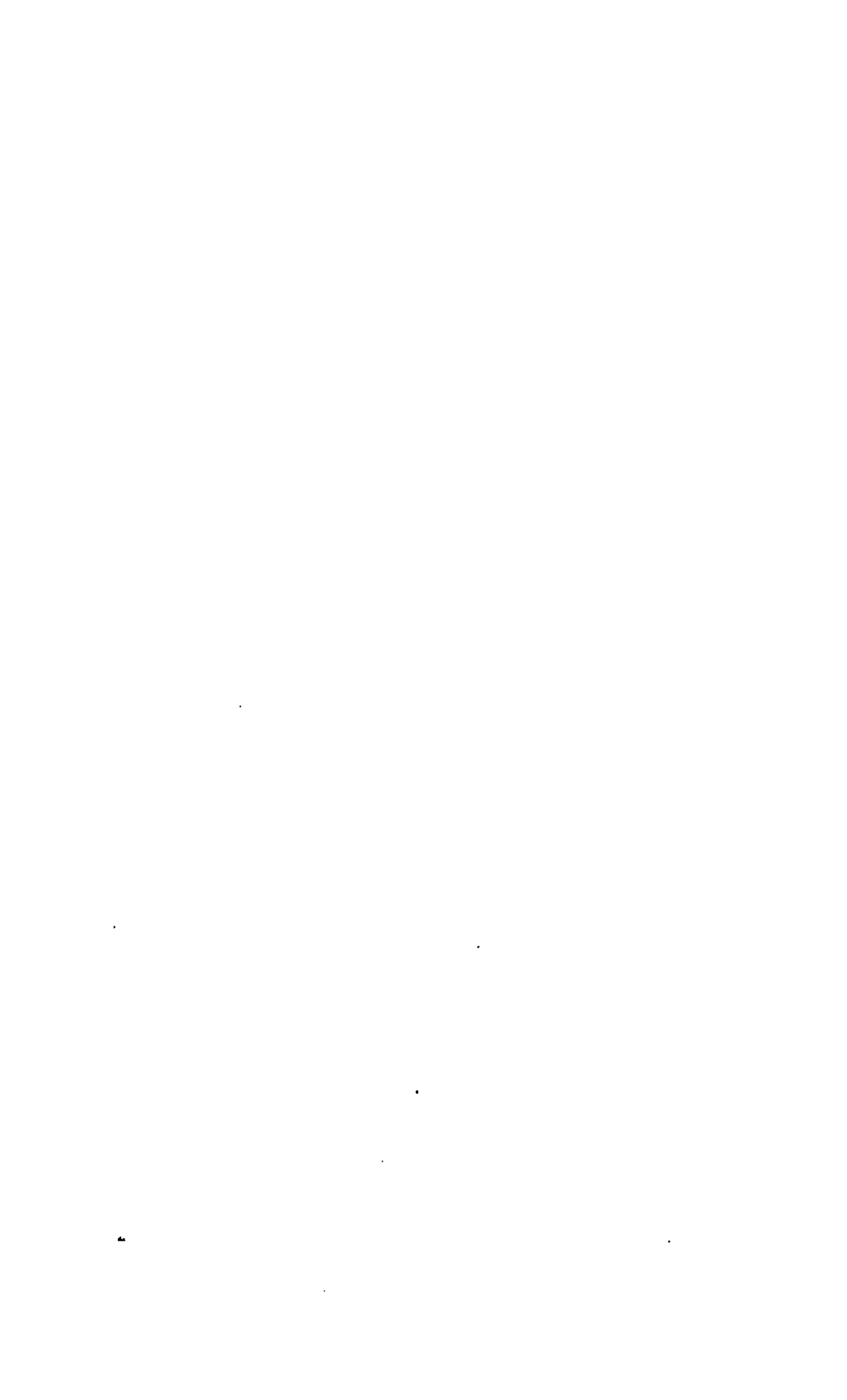
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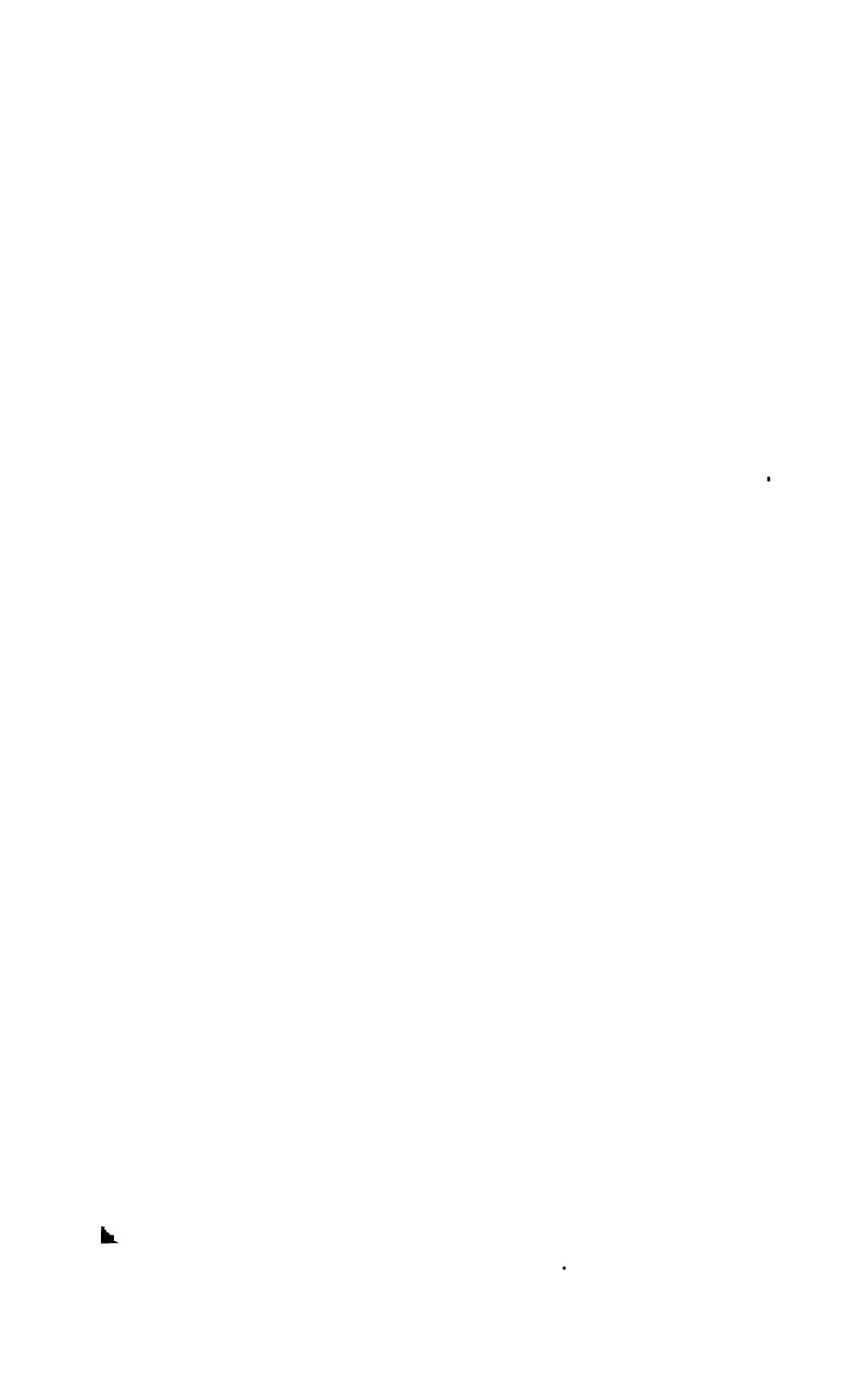
say that while even a sham confession may be interesting to hoi polloi, yet to secure an endorsement from such minds as those of Emerson, George Eliot and Walt Whitman the confession must be genuine.







**AN EXPERIMENT IN
COMMUNISM**



III.

AN EXPERIMENT IN COMMUNISM.

*As It
Seems
To Me*



ONCE upon a day, years and years ago, I was one of a syndicate of twenty-eight men that bought a tract of ground on a waterside near a certain large city ❀

We did not purchase this land on speculation: we secured it for the sole and exclusive purpose of establishing thereon homes for ourselves. We divided our beautiful woodland up into plots and were assigned our portions by lot. And then we began to beautify our acres—that is to say, we cleared off the brush and trees, removed the stumps and bowlders; and leveling the ground, we purchased lawn mowers, terra cotta dogs and cast iron flower vases ❀❀❀

And we erected "cottages," some of which had many rooms with spacious fireplaces, and wide verandas, and observatories, and north windows built on angles so to catch the beams of the rising sun, and from which his last lingering rays could be seen as he sank a golden ball into the waters of the lake.

❀ The whole scheme was ideal, and we named our little city Idyllia. We were to have our own homes, yet live as one happy family; with the sacred silences of the forest we were to have the advantages of the city. No member had been admitted who was not guaranteed respectable by three members, and the two men who organized the Association each vouched for the other. No bonds were given that the wives were women of tact and good temper, nor were assurances demanded that the numerous children were reasonably well behaved—we took all that

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for granted ♣ We insisted only on this: That the couples should all have been legally married and the children all born in wedlock. That these conditions were complied with can be proven; and in several cases were ♣

And we were very happy.

♣ There were twenty-eight men and twenty-eight women and many children; besides these there were maid-servants and man-servants. We had a public dining hall which at first all patronized; and on those first summer days we were all very gracious and dignified and polite.

But there was one man from Chicago in our Association who, when the day was warm, appeared at meal time in shirt-sleeves. And once a lady at our table allowed her baby, a dimpled yearling, to crawl across the festive board to its papa who sat on the other side; and after this my wife preferred to prepare meals in our own house, rather than avail herself of the advantages of communal feeding.

Several of the ladies in our Community were musical, one or two painted china, others did "fancy work." One had been an actress, and when she proposed getting up private theatricals a sharp line of demarcation was struck between those who believed it was wicked to go to the theatre and those who considered the stage elevating ♣ And it was then I discovered that several of our members were Methodists; and soon, after a little investigation, I ascertained that in theology we ran the gamut from an Infidel who denied everything to Close Communion Baptists who boasted of their credulity and hesitated at nothing. Yet for the most part we were Agnostics—with liberal leanings and Orthodox wives ♣ But once stirred up, we drew the most hair splitting lines

'twixt tweedledee and tweedledum ; and these lines caused a coolness to spring up between families, so certain mothers cautioned their children not to play with certain other children ~~with~~

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We had a chapel where two or three gathered themselves together on each Wednesday night. On Sundays there were "Union Services" led by pastors from the city, invited by different members, and all except the directly interested kept away so as to discourage "the opposition."

♣ In our membership was one Jewish family who "kept" Saturday very punctiliously in satin and broadcloth. And they kept Sunday too—by opening beer bottles on their front verandas and inviting in the Infidel and his wife. These good people had a little pen of geese in their back yard and at certain times a dark man whom they called "Koheleth" used to come and kill the geese for them, and the feathers blowing onto the lawns of others, the others protested, for they did not like feathers on their lawns.

♣ And some perceiving that there was danger of our community growing apart, gave progressive euchre parties to cement the social bonds. At the first meeting there were no refreshments and we went home at ten o'clock. At the next meeting we had a solo and elocution, lemonade and cake, and we stayed until eleven ; soon we had coffee, ice cream, lemonade and cake and cheese straws and we stayed until twelve. Shortly after it came the turn of our Jewish member and we had all the items on the menu that had been on the menu before, with pate de foi gras, oysters and "yellow label" added, and we did not go home till morning. For when the refreshments were served we were surprised by the strains of an orchestra hidden behind a bank of ferns in an adjoining room, and

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at this some one suggested "doncing" and we donced. The refreshments were served by colored men brought from the city: there were also flitting about several old Afri-American aunties in white caps and aprons who afterwards, I understood, did the dishes. In the kitchen, perched on a saw buck, was a keg of lager on tap in deference to several members of Teutonic origin, and others of Teutonic proclivities. Many guests found their way to the kitchen.

Now the Steinheimers (for it was they) had carried the matter of entertainment to aphelion, and the next week we had a Longfellow Talk and this was followed by a Dickens Party which marked the perihelion of our social orbit.

But I saw that nearly all who attended these entertainments were hopelessly bored; they strived hard to look pleasant at the time, but on the morrow many asked me quietly if I did not consider the whole thing abominably managed. And the question arose in my mind: Why did these twenty-eight families, so totally unlike, come together in this way? ♣ Women practically make society—in the society column sense—so I looked to the women for a reason, and I found that these women did not come together in this way because there was any affinity between them, but the one point in common was that they all had diamond earrings and seal-skin sacques.

I discovered that every woman on the ground had a seal-skin sacque and I perceived that nearly all of these sacques were new or had been worn at most but a few years, so I concluded that the husband's income was formerly less—in short the happy husband of the woman in seal-skin had recently struck pay gravel. This was the case with me. And on further investigation I found that it was the case with

all others. We wished to get into society and we had all made the break together. Our society was founded on a purely financial basis. Having about the same incomes, we all had bitten at the same bait.

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In fact on quiet questioning I found that the highest income among our members was thirty-five hundred dollars and the lowest twenty-five hundred dollars. Practically we were a plutocracy. This view of the case was fully corroborated shortly after by the fact that two of our members falling heirs to large fortunes abandoned the Idyllic Association—one for Newport and the other for Saratoga—and the places that knew them once knew them no more forever. Then another man got struck by a financial blizzard: his income was suddenly cut down to a thousand a year, and the air no longer agreeing with his wife's lungs he sold out cheaply. But the places of each of these three men were taken by others who were making about three thousand dollars per annum. And so after a year I saw that without fail if a man's income went over four thousand or under twenty-five hundred we lost him.

About this time wheat dropped ten points and my cash balance appeared in red ink at my bankers. I held on for a few months by my eyebrows, and when my wife was forced to trim over her last summer's hat, and make over my trousers for the boys, we could no longer hide our shame; and we moved back to the city by night and took our old quarters over the grocery.

This happened ten years ago.

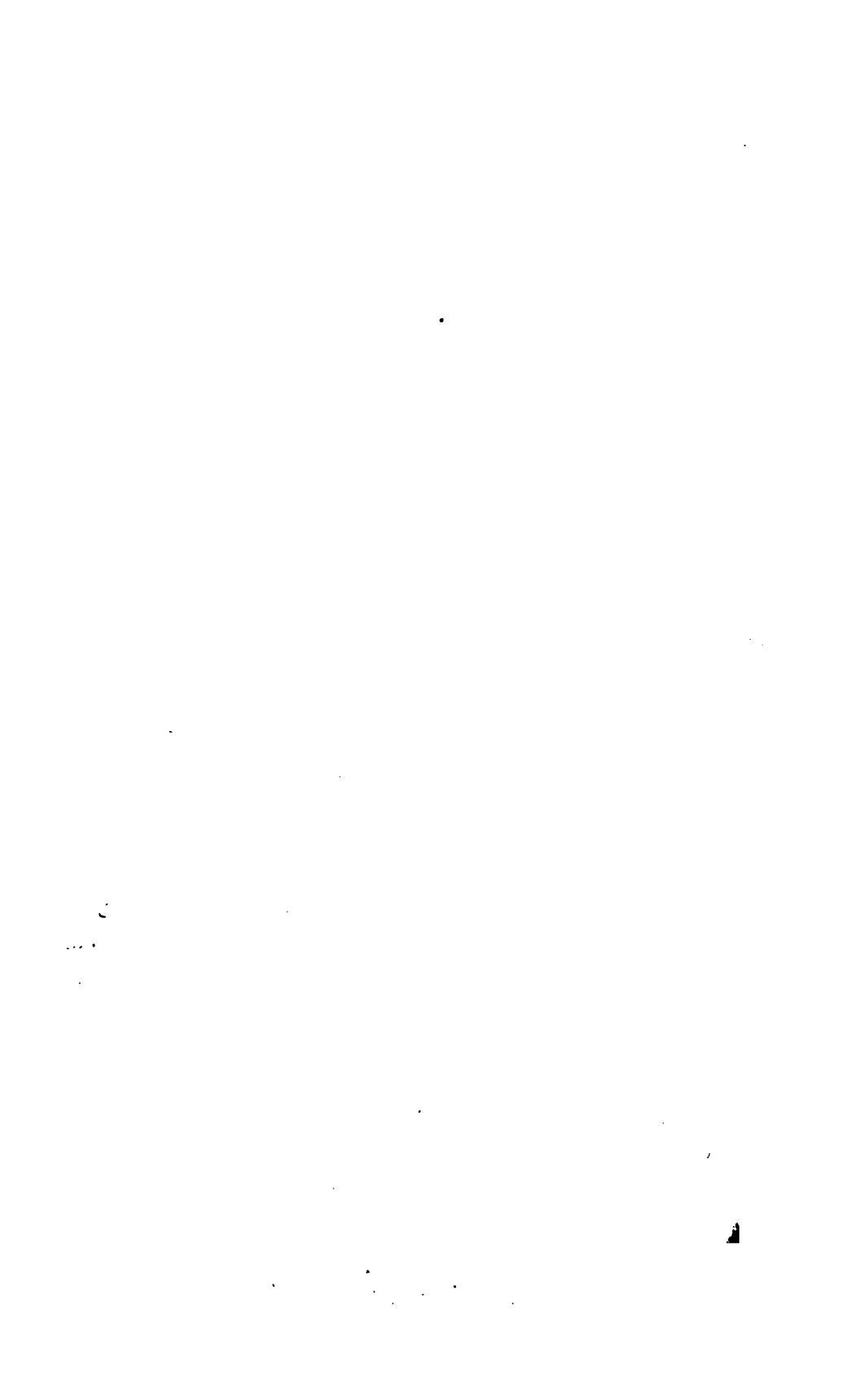
Last summer, in disguise, I visited Idyllia and found it still in a flourishing condition. But the minimum of income required now to hold out is four thousand dollars instead of twenty-five hundred as formerly.

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There is less discord than at first, and I am sure that the mental misery endured by the members is much reduced. For time adapts men to environment. Thus I see the Infidel of Idyllia is no longer blatant, nor are the Baptists now severe. The Methodists dance and the Presbyterians play cards; the pork packer wears his coat in the dining hall; the Jewish family have their geese killed away from home; and the good people with German proclivities have their beer delivered by the grocer in boxes, marked books, and they drink it indoors instead of popping corks on the veranda at the passer-by. The Law of Reversion to Type is doing its perfect work. As a dozen varieties of pigeons put together in a loft will in a few years all change to a plain slaty-grey flock, with no apparent difference between individuals, so have the residents of Idyllia reverted to a type. And if there are no pronounced virtues in Idyllia neither are there flagrant faults. All voice the same words when approached; all make the same movements under any certain set of conditions; and very dull is the psychologist who cannot anticipate any and every opinion they may express.

The jarring pains of life are reduced to the minimum; the problems are solved, all are content, for a smooth lawn with terra cotta statuary gives a peace to the possessor that even religion cannot lend.







WHY I AM A PHILISTINE



IV.

WHY I AM A PHILISTINE.

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LONG and carefully written letter from an unknown gentleman who signs himself "Retired Professor," has recently reached me.

The Great Obscure favor me quite often with anonymous epistles, but life being short and the waste basket wide, I seldom reply. Yet now an exception must be made and I answer "Retired Professor" for the sole and simple reason that he has "retired," and in retiring has made the world his debtor. Probably no one act of this man's entire life has been so potent for good as this. He has set all Professors without humor a most precious precedent. In gratitude, hoping that his example will bear fruit, I reply.

Did space permit I would be glad to print my correspondent's letter entire, but the gist of his scholarly argument is that The Society of the Philistines is endeavoring to make free-thought universal and paganism popular. He stoutly avers that the ancient Philistines were the enemies of Jehovah, that they worshipped strange gods and that they were the sworn foes of the Chosen People.

Now this is the sad part: he proves his case.

The gentleman explains that he would not have seen the "Philistine Magazine" had not his daughter, "an unmarried lady of thirty-two," purchased several copies; but from this on, with his permission, no more numbers of this "infidelic infernal machine" shall enter his house.

My heart goes out to all unmarried ladies of thirty-two. Especially so when they have fathers who are

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irascible ; only one worse fate can befall a woman of thirty-two than to have an irascible father, and that is to have a lover who is irate. Still I doubt me not that the daughter of " Retired Professor " will find a way to read the " Philistine," for booklets laugh at locksmiths ! ❀

Yet, ignorance prevails, for is not " Retired Professor " living proof ? And so I will say : There lived in the Far East about three thousand years ago a tribe of people known as Philistines. It is a hotly mooted question among the theologians whether they were so-called because they lived in Philistia or whether Philistia took its name on account of being peopled by Philistines. I will not take sides on this issue, but hedge closely and simply stand firm on the fact that a tribe called the Philistines existed. Near them lived the Hivites, the Moabites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Perizzites, the Ammonites and the Gothamites.

Now among these tribes none were so strong, none so intelligent, none so handsome, none so virtuous as the Philistines ❀❀❀

And it came to pass that the superior quality of moral fibre in the Philistines caused the entire country to be known as Philistia ; it was the general name given to the whole valley of the Jordan ❀ And the name endures even unto this day.

Palestine means the land of the Philistines.

And it seems that among them there was a rude sense of right and wrong. For if a man owned a piece of ground and planted a vine on it, and then watered and tended the vine, the grapes that grew on this vine were his, and all of the people agreed to this, and the man and his neighbors knew all this without a Dispensation ❀❀

These people planted vineyards, and had gardens, and fields of wheat and barley ♣ They had barns with threshing floors ; and they had carts, plows and other implements. They builded houses and owned their homes ; and the men loved their wives and their children ; and the women were the comrades of the men—all taking part in the sports as well as in the work, for they were a merry, happy people ♣ Now about thirteen centuries before the Christian Era, while they were living in peace and prosperity, there swooped down upon them a horde of escaped slaves, called Israelites. These slaves had broken away from their masters in Egypt. The country to which they traveled was only about three hundred miles from Egypt, but as their average speed was less than a mile a week it took them forty years to make the journey ♣

The man who led these slaves in their flight was one Moses, who in a righteous cause had killed a man in Egypt and fled. After many years of exile, during which time he had been in Philistia and liked it, he returned and led the exodus ♣ When the Israelites left they took all the gold and silver ornaments and utensils they could "borrow," and melted them up. And they were not ashamed of this act, for they have written it down in the third chapter of a book called Exodus. The ancient Israelites never had any clear ideas as to the rights of property. When they found grapes growing on a vine they helped themselves and swore that the fruit was theirs by Divine right. ♣ In order to impress this ignorant, barbaric horde with the sense of authority, Moses, who was diplomatic as well as good, told the people that God directed him and that Deity told him what to do and say. Moses used to go up on a mountain, clear above the

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clouds, beyond where the mists hover, and when he came down the people asked him what he had been up there for, and he told them he went up there to see God. In no other way could Moses control this restless mob except by saying, God says so and so. And the fact that their leader was on such good terms with Elohim or Yoveh, inflated these people so that they always spoke of themselves as "the Chosen People of God." In fact they took it all in and were so vain and boastful that Moses was often ashamed of them. The Jebusites, the Hittites and the Moabites never referred to the Israelites as the Chosen People of God. No one called them the Chosen People of God—only they themselves.

And I wish to say right here that the individual who does a great and magnificent work is on close and friendly terms with God. He is the Son of God, and it is necessary that he should feel this kinship in order to do his work. From Moses, the called of God, on up to Socrates who listened to the Dæmon, to George Fox who hearkened to the Voice, to the prophets of our own time, all lie low in the Lord's hand and listen closely ere they act. A man is strong only when he feels that he is backed by a Power, not his own, that makes for Righteousness. So Moses was not guilty of falsehood; but the people who took him literally put him in a wrong light.

When I think of these brave souls, the Saviours of the World, who have sought to lead men out of the captivity of evil—feeling and knowing that they were the Sons of God—I stand uncovered. But a mass of people—a crowd, a mob—that claims to be a "Chosen People" is a sight to make angels weep. "You cannot indict a class," said Macaulay; corporations have no souls, and a horde that claims to be inspired is

only a howling, cowardly Thing. Great men are ever lonely and live apart, but birds of a feather flock together because they are afraid to flock alone. They want warmth and protection—they are afraid. A mob is the quintessence of cowardice—a dirty, mad, hydra-headed monster, that one good valiant St. George can thrust to the heart. When a mob speaks I say: Vox populi vox devil!

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At the time the Israelites tumbled pell-mell onto the Philistines Moses had long been dead. The mob was without a leader and quarrel was rife amid its broken ranks. In a mad rush they stampeded the herds of the Philistines, scattered their flocks, destroyed their gardens, and as excuse they shouted: We are the Chosen People of God!! And one of their Poets sang a song, two lines of which run thus:

Moab is my wash-pot,
Over Phillistia will I cast my shoe.

This only made the Philistines laugh, and although the Israelites outnumbered them, they went at it and scattered them. Finally after long years of warfare, the fight was called a draw, and the Jews settled down and following the good example of the Philistines made themselves homes.

Of course, as sane men and women, we of today do not suppose that the great Universal Intelligence that holds the world in the hollow of His hand had much interest in the fight. If this intelligence were a Being, I can imagine Him looking over the battlement of Heaven and turning with a weary smile to Gabriel, saying, "Let 'em fight—what boots it! they will all be dead tomorrow, anyway."

It is a noteworthy fact that in the first chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew the Inspired Writer traces the genealogy of Jesus direct to the Philistines. In the

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sixth verse we find "David begat Solomon of her who had been the wife of Urias." Back of this is Ruth the Moabitess, who was the grandmother of David. There is no such thing as tracing a pure Jewish lineage back to the time of Moses. The Jews went a-courting as soon as they arrived on the borders of Canaan; and the heathen quite fancied the Israelitish women from the first. In the Book of Ruth, first chapter and fourth verse, I see, "And they took them wives out of the country of Moab." The houses of Capulet and Montague have ever intermarried—it seems a quiet way Nature has of playing a little joke. ♣ And after a painstaking study of the matter I am fully convinced that the many sterling qualities in the Jew are derived from his Philistine ancestry. No one doubts that Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived. His mother was a Philistine. Now no man is ever greater than his mother, and it is very plain that the great wisdom of Solomon was derived from this pagan woman whose body and spirit nourished him; in whose loving arms he was cradled; and whose intellect first fired his aspiration. This is all made plainer yet when we remember that David had many sons by Jewish women, and that all of these sons were positively no good—and some of them very, very bad. The facts are found in the Second Book of Samuel—a book, by the way, which no respectable girl should allow her mother to read.

But if any captious critic arises and denies the Law of Heredity, for argument's sake, I'll waive this matter of maternal transmission of excellence and rest my case as to Solomon's wisdom on the fact that he married over four hundred Philistine women. And as stated by Sir Walter Besant in a recent story, "a newly married woman always tells her husband ev-

everything she knows," I feel safe in saying that Solomon's transcendent wisdom was derived from Philistine sources *~ ~ ~*

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Only one incident in the history of this people do I wish to set straight before the world at this writing—that is the story of Goliath. According to recently discovered cuneiform inscriptions it is found that the giant lived long enough to attend the funeral of David, so it is hardly likely that David slew him. That David threw pebbles at the warrior is doubtless true, but the giant of course paid no attention to the boys that followed him—going along about his business just as any other dignified giant would have done. But David went home and told that he had killed the man—and the Israelites wishing to leave a proud record wrote the tale down as history. We have reason to believe that this story was interpolated into the Bible during the first of the Third Century. In David's case summer and autumn quite fulfilled the promise of spring. That eleventh chapter of Second Samuel, showing how he stole Bath-Sheba and then killed Uriah, her husband, reveals the quality of the man. But it was left for his dying act to crown a craven career. With his last lingering breath—with the rattle of death in his throat—he gasped to his son, referring to a man who had never wronged him, "His hoar head bring thou down to the grave in blood!" With the utterance of these frightful words his soul passed out into the Unknown.

In all that David wrote, not a word can I find that hints at his belief in a future life—he simply never thought of it! and dying as a dog dies, he gnashed at Shimei, whose offense was that thirty-five years before he had told David a little wholesome truth. Shimei was a brave fellow and David dare not fight

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him, so he made a truce with him and swore an oath that he would never molest him, but dying he charged Solomon to search him out with a sword. This is recorded by the Inspired Writer in the ninth verse of the second chapter of First Kings.

With forty-one distinct crimes to David's charge, the killing of nine hundred thousand men and two hundred thousand women and children, the houghing of thousands of horses, all of which is set down in infallible Holy Writ, his record is very bluggy. In fact, his whole life's pathway is streaked with infamy.

♣ David being a literary man of acknowledged merit, I have given him more attention than I would a plain, every-day king. And I now brand him as an all 'round rogue. I do this calmly, holding myself personally responsible, and fully prepared to plead justification and prove my case should the heirs or next-of-kin consider my language libellous.

And while I do not know anything about it for certain, it is my opinion that at the Last Great Day the folks who stayed around home and pruned their vines and tended their flocks and loved their wives and babies will fare a deal better than those other men who made war on an innocent people and tried to render them homeless. Of course I may be wrong about this, but I cannot help having an opinion ♣ Altogether, my sympathies are with the Philistines—who were so strong in personality that they gave their name to the Holy Land—Pelishton, Pelesheth, Philistia, Palestina, PALESTINE.



LONG years ago Professor Jowett called attention to the fact that the word Philistia literally meant Land of Friendship; the term having the same root as the Greek word Philos—Love. Max Muller has recently said: "The dwellers in the Valley of the Jordan, in the fifteenth century before Christ, recognizing the idea of Oneness or Fraternity, gave a name that signified Love-Land to their country: thus embodying the modern thought of the Brotherhood of Man."

In view of these things it was rather a strange move—a man so scholarly as Matthew Arnold applying the word "Philistine" as a term of reproach toward those who did not think as he did! I can see though that he shaped his language to fit the ears of his clientele. He sought to make clever copy—and he did. The opinion being abroad that the Philistines were the enemies of Light—how very funny to throw the word like a mud ball at any and all who chanced to smile at his theories! Having small wit of their own, the scribbling rabble took it up.

On reading certain books by a Late Critic, who now wears prison garb and is doing the first honest work that ever his hands found to do, I see that he is very fond of calling people who are outside of his particular cult, "Philistines."

But look you! Brave Taurus at the bull-fight is a deal more worthy of respect than the picadores who for a price harrow him without ruth to his death. And as his virtue surpasses that of any in the silken, belaced and perfumed throng who sit safe and with lily fingers applaud, so do we accept your banderilla, recognizing from whence it comes, and wear it jauntily as a badge of honor.

As the Cross for eighteen hundred years has been a

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sacred emblem, and the gallows since John Brown glorious; and as the word Quaker, flung in impudent and impotent wrath, now stands for gentleness, peace and truth, so has the word Philistine become a synonym for manly independence.

In Literature he is a Philistine who seeks to express his personality in his own way. A true Philistine is one who brooks no let or hindrance from the tipstiffs of letters, who are only intent on crystalizing a life and language that are as yet very imperfect. These men strive hard to reduce all life to a geometrical theorem and its manifestations to an algebraic formula. But fate is greater than a college professor, and so far its mysteries, having given the slip to all the creeds, are still at large ☞ My individual hazard at truth is as legitimate as yours. The self appoint-

ed beadles of letters demand that we shall
neither smile nor sleep while their Presid-
ing Elders drone, but we plead in the
World's Assize for the privilege of
doing both. So in Art we ask
for the widest, freest and ☞
☞ fullest liberty for
Individuality—
that's all!





THE SONG OF SONGS



V.

THE SONG OF SONGS.

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SO JUST here it was that a brightsome woman, who has thoughts as well as feelings, said to me (seated near) that she never ceases to marvel at the miracle of a person making marks on bark, paper or parchment, and when this bark, paper or parchment is looked upon by another person that this second person should weep or laugh or be moved to profoundest thought. A traveller says that once in Africa he sent a written message to his Lieutenant a hundred miles away. After the Lieutenant had looked at the flimsy little piece of paper, behold! he knew just where his chief was and how it fared with him—and this without the messenger saying a word. Then did they who had carried the little piece of paper fall down on their faces before the white man and pray him that he would cut off their heads, or do with them whatsoever he would. In Mexico I have been in villages where only one man—the priest—could read and write, and it was not hard to imagine why the people of the place looked upon this priest as the agent of Deity, the mouthpiece of God. Even today, when the rumble of printing presses never dies from our ears, the anonymous editorial carries a certain specific gravity and is quoted as authority, when the spoken words of the man himself are scarcely listened to, certainly not remembered, even by his barber. And in days ago, when rolls of carefully prepared papyrus were found, I wonder not that men looked upon the deathless thought of a man long dead as a message from the gods. Then, forsooth, if the

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message were not plainly expressed on the surface of the text, the Wise Men sought to interpret it and make it plain to those less wise. And as in boyhood's days when I went swimming, the lad who dived the deepest and brought up most mud was crowned with honor, although he wore nothing else, so the man who found in the words of the papyrus the most portentous meaning was deemed most profound.

All people with broad sympathies agree that there is something pathetic in these frantic efforts to wring a message from a Sphinx, a Sphinx with stony lips. When the inhabitants of that old city in the East were sore beset by enemies, they called upon their God to tell them what to do. They gathered around the statue expecting a reply, but when no answer came and the enemy thundered at their gates, they dragged the speechless Idol from its pedestal and brake it into pieces ☞

When the papyrus roll seemed to yield no message, the Wise Men cast it aside and would fain have destroyed it. The papyrus that gave an answer they called Canonical, and that which answered not at all, or but faintly, they termed Apocryphal. And they determined which was Canonical and which Apocryphal by ballot. That which was declared Canonical was always believed to be Apocryphal by some, and that which was Apocryphal to many was always deemed Canonical by a few.

Canonical books were accepted by the people as the Word of God until certain men called Infidels arose and wished to destroy the Idol because it gave no answer that they could hear, how to bring deliverance from the doubts and fears that besieged their hearts ☞ And then all the people who accepted the verdict of the Wise Men and believed that the Idol

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had spoken to others, even though it had not to them, arose, and instead of destroying the Idol they destroyed the Infidels. And this was meet, for the Infidels should have understood that a statue may be beautiful in itself: that it may adorn a niche upon the wall of Time and so speak by silent inference to all who pass. Whether it has ever spoken to others is naught, save to the anthropologist and the historian, and to us—who read their entertaining tales. It was not so very long ago that a Book bound in oaken boards, riveted in bands of iron wrought in curious shapes, locked with ponderous key, borne upon a silver salver by a stoled and tonsured priest of God, was carried in solemn processional with silent steps and slow to the Altar. Then the Book was unlocked, opened, and from it the priest chanted in strange, unknown tongue, and the people listened in breathless awe to the words that Deity had dictated in order that men might be surely saved from an impending doom.


“In times of old all books were religious oracles. As literature advanced they became venerable preceptors; then they descended to the rank of instructive friends, and as their number increased they sunk still lower, to that of entertaining companions.” There is a certain truth in these peculiar words of Coleridge, but books have not sunk; rather men have been raised to a degree where they are the companions of the men who instruct and entertain them; no longer do we crawl with our faces in the dust before a tome.

In a footnote of the Bagster Bible is this item: “The Apocrypha does not contain a single oracle that for originality of force, spontaneity of utterance, and simplicity and terseness of diction can be compared

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with the words that proceed from the Fountain Head of true Revelation." And a little further along the information is vouchsafed that God has not spoken orally to man in eighteen hundred years.

In the British Museum I was allowed to examine a copy of the Breeches Bible, in the preface of which is a very useful definition: "Sacred Scripture is the Word of God, letter for letter as expressed through the inspired writer, and copied or printed by His servants." It will thus be seen that not only was the original writer inspired, but the compositor, a claim that I have never seen put forward before or since in behalf of that much abused individual. It should then be noted that many men have believed that God has not only inspired the writing of books but has seen them safely through the press. Over against the definition just quoted is an interesting explanation by Rev. Jonathan Edwards: "Outside of Sacred Scripture all writing is profane: it is the work of scheming man. The words may be true and may not—probably not." 

But it is unfortunate that there is no demarcation between Sacred Writ and profane writing: some distinguishing feature that could not be overlooked nor waived aside. Such a mark set on Inspiration would have saved much bitter controversy, for it is mere truism to state that families have been severed, churches divided, cities separated into factions, aye, nations destroyed: all through a difference of opinion as to whether or not certain literary works were directly communicated by God 

Mr. Spurgeon has said: "Holy Writ exists for the purpose of showing man his duty to God," but the poem with which we have to deal is peculiar in that it is the only Book in the Bible that contains no ref-

erence to a Supreme Being. A man belonging to the Chosen People is talking with a woman who is a heathen, and if this couple know anything of God they keep the knowledge strictly to themselves. The man makes no effort to convert the woman, indeed, she seems fully as intelligent as he; not a hint of Elohim, or angels, or spirits, or devils, or heaven or hell; of man's duty to God, or man's duty to man; not a single moral injunction, not an ethical precept; not a suggestion of miracle is given, or of things supernatural: nothing but the earth and the beauty that is seen in it.

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And yet, the Canonicity of the Book has never been challenged save by a few captious critics of no standing in scholarship. The Holy Fathers could be cited at great length to show the high esteem and exalted reverence in which the song has ever been held. In the Mischna, Rabbi Akiba says: "Peace and mercy! No man in Israel ever doubted the Canonicity of the Song of Songs, for the course of ages cannot vie with the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel. All the Kethubin are indeed a holy thing, but the Song of Songs is a Holy of Holies." Origen, who is called the Father of Christian Exegesis, enumerates the chief songs of the Bible and then says: "And after thou hast passed through all these thou must mount higher to sing with the Bridegroom the Song of Songs."

According to the statement of Luther, the Book is an allegory representing Solomon's relation to the Commonwealth of Israel; but it is intimated that the author doubtless belonged to the fleshly school of poets. In a recent sermon Mr. Talmage explains at length that the Song is a prophetic parable referring to Christ as the bridegroom and the Church as the

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bride. Indeed, I believe this is the universal Evangelistic belief. But various fanciful interpretations have been given us, some of which are nearly as ingenious as the claim recently made by an English clergyman that the Golden Calf, worshipped by the children of Israel, was prophetic of the British Nation: the gold of the calf signifying the wealth of the Empire on which the sun never sets, and the calf doubtless being a bull calf,—for there is no evidence to the contrary—typifying John Bull.

Theodoret long, long ago stated it was his belief that the Song of Songs was simply a love dialogue which passed between Solomon and a certain Shulamite maiden. But to this a clamorous denial has rung down the centuries, and the assertion has repeatedly been put forward that mere love songs chanted back

and forth between a young man and a young woman were not lovely things at all and

without there was some deep, hidden

and occult meaning in the lines the

Song would not have been preserved, either by Divine

Providence or by His

Instruments, the

Wise Men

of Old.





DE OF TODAY, however, perhaps swinging back to a view which corresponds with that of the author of the Song, do not regard passionate love as an unholy thing. We say as does Mr. Andrew Lang in his preface to Aucassin and Nicolette, that a love without conscience, admitting that at present it may be bad sociological policy, is delightful to contemplate. And with Mr. Herbert Spencer as authority, I will add that nothing is "wicked" per se. Things are either good or bad as they bring good results or bad results. Even the stern Mosaic Law is merely sanitary in its aim, its design being social good and nothing more. ♣ So let us view the statue simply as a statue. We will touch elbows with the theologians as they view it, too, and if they will but allow us to hold that it has no significance to us save the significance that a passionate love without dignity always has, we will allow them to display any result they may bring up from their deep dives after truth.

To me the Song of Songs is simply the purring of a healthy young barbaric chief to a sun-kissed shepherdess, and she, tender-hearted, innocent and loving, purrs back in turn, as sun-kissed maidens ever have and will. The poem was composed, we have reason to believe, fully three thousand years ago, yet its impressionist picture of the ecstasy of youthful love is charming and fresh as the color of a Titian.

♣ An out-of-door love, under the trees, where "the beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir . . . and our bed is green," is the dream of all lovers and poets. Thus the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, "naked and unshamed," has been told a score of times, and holds its place in all Sacred Writ. Shakespeare in "As You Like It" and

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"The Tempest" shows the idea. Paul and Virginia give us a glimpse of the same thought; so does the Emilius of Rousseau, and more than once Browning suggests it in his matchless poems. Stevenson has touched deftly on the beautiful dream and so have several other modern story tellers.

And surely the love of man and woman is not an ungodly thing, else why should God have made it? "God's dice are loaded," says Emerson, and further he adds, "All natural love between boy and girl, man and woman, is a lovely object, for the richness of its mental and spiritual possibilities are to us unguessed." ❧❧❧

Sex holds first place in the thought of God. Its glory pervades and suffuses all Nature. It is sex that gives the bird its song, the peacock his gorgeous plumage, the lion his mane, the buffalo his strength and the horse his proud arch of neck and flowing tail. Aye, it is sex that causes the flowers to draw from the dull earth those delicate perfumes that delight the sense of smell; it is sex, and sex alone, that secures to them the dazzling galaxy of shapes and colors that reflect the Infinite. The painter knows naught of color, and never could, save as the flowers lead the way. The flowers are at once the inspiration and the hopeless tantalization of the colorist and the perfumer: they can never hope to equal their matchless harmonies ❧

And thus while we see that the sex principle is the animating factor for good in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, man, for the most part, deliberately flings away God's most precious gift. And he is made to answer for his folly with his spiritual life, for man, wise as he is, and pluming himself upon his ability to defeat his fellows, cannot with impunity play his

tricksy games with God ♣♣ Boys of twelve or fourteen are savages at heart. Being devoid of pity they often visit on each other and on dumb animals the most shocking cruelties. A few years pass and your young barbarian is transformed into a gentle man—a man of fine feeling and tender sensibilities. The years keep going by and if love is thwarted, perverted or misplaced he passes into savagery again—no matter what his creed may be—controlled by fear and kept in check through awe of society and statute law. After marriage men no longer win their wives; they own them. And women, living in the blighting atmosphere of a continuous personal contact that knows no respite, drift off into apathetic, dull indifference ♣ The wife becomes an animal; the husband a brute. The lively grace, the tender solicitude, the glowing animation, the alert intellect, the sympathetic heart, the aspiring spirit—where are these now? They are gone, gone like time gone—dead as the orange buds that erstwhile opened their shell-like petals to catch the strains of the Wedding March—dead.

♣ That men and women bring about their spiritual bankruptcy through gross ignorance, I have not the least doubt. And I am fully convinced that while woman has a sure and delicate insight into many things, in this particular she is singularly ignorant and willful ♣ Doctor Charcot says: "I have known many men who endeavored to put their marital relations on a gentle, chivalric basis, but in nearly ♣ every case the wife interposed a tearful, beseeching veto, or else filed a hot accusation of growing coldness that could only be disproved in one way.

♣ Virtuous women seldom know anything of the psychology of love until it is too late to use the knowledge, and young women, thinking they know

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already, cannot be taught." ~~etc~~ There is no proof that Solomon, the Jewish King, was the author of, or one of the dramatis personæ, in this poem. The absolute equality of the man and woman being essentially pagan, it is a pleasing exception to the Christo-Semitic idea of woman's inferiority. Professor Boyesen says, "The Bible has had an enormous influence in forcibly checking the normal development of woman. . . . There is something exceedingly attractive to me in the picture of the Northern tribal chiefs, with their wives and mothers grouped upon the earthen floor about the fire, deliberating concerning the affairs of the Commonwealth. I see the tall, brawny warriors, whose stubborn, blue eyes and shaggy, blonde heads looked so terrible to the puny Italians; and the paintings of Thumann and Piloty have aided me in divining their female counterparts. Where will you find a more splendid matronly dignity or more defiant majesty in womanhood than Piloty's Thusnelda? Where such noble and healthful simplicity and vigor as in the Teutonic maidens in Herman's Return From His Victory Over the Romans? They have a fine, free, out-of-door, sturdy, half boyish candor which is so touching in the face of a girl. They have never heard St. Paul's injunction that women shall not speak in meeting, and they utter, with a full sense of responsibility, grave, well-considered words upon which the fate of the tribe may rest."

The position of woman as set forth in the Bible is one of slavery. The Pauline doctrine that women should learn in silence with all due subjection, runs like a rotten thread through all the fabric of Christianity. This feature is pure Orientalism. And as the Second Commandment was the death of Art for a

thousand years, so has the forced servility of woman held our civilization in thrall to a degree that no man can compute. The flaunting boast that woman owes her freedom to the Christian Religion is only advanced by ignorant and over-zealous people. Honest scholarship knows otherwise.

The enslaving of women and holding them by law only came in when man was getting a bit "civilized." The pure, happy life of Nature would pale at the thought of abusing one's mate. Among wild animals the females are protected; no tigress is ever abused or imposed upon—in fact she would not stand it. In a condition of untrammelled nature animals are eminently just and moral in their love affairs. In a state of captivity, however, they will sometimes do very unbecoming things. The wild duck is monogamous; the proud and showy green-head lives with his pretty, Quaker-gray partner in happy comradeship. They are as true and sacred to each other as though they were married by a Methodist preacher and lived in Syracuse, New York, watched over by the police and looked after by the neighbors. But domesticate your ducks and at once a life of promiscuity begins.

♣ Man, in a state of Nature, is true to his mate, but civilize him and he may be. "New York society is imperfectly monogamous," says Mr. Howells. From this we see that civilization for man acts like captivity on an animal. Is it the law of "Thou Shalt Not" that breeds Immorality?

In the Germania, Tacitus says that among the ancient Teutons the women were looked up to with a sort of sanctity. They were the mothers of men yet to be, and were treated with delicacy and deference; and in the state councils their advice was always listened to. Between the man and his wife there existed a

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noble comradeship. Paganism in Scandinavia evolved a sturdier type of womanhood than Christianity has since. In pagan Iceland women were treated with an equality today unknown. The Icelanders recognized their intelligence and were in full possession of the truth that the children of a man and woman who live on a mental equality, and mutually respect and love each other, are far better than chance offspring born of slaves. To this end, where love had died, they freely granted divorce when both parties desired it, and in all ways sought to strengthen and encourage love marriages. All this as opposed to the Oriental method of marrying for place and power—"unsight and unseen"—which is yet carried on by the crowned heads, that lie uneasy.

Christianity accepted the Semitic idea of woman's inferiority as a matter of course, emphasizing a strange delusion born of sated appetite, that "through woman's fault man fell." Thus woman was blamed for the evil of the world, and we have even been guilty of speaking of the little souls fresh from God being born in sin. The Jewish law required a woman to do penance and make sacrifice for her fault of bearing a child; all of which monstrous perversion of truth seems pitiable when compared with pagan Greece, where men uncovered their heads on meeting a woman with-child, and solemnly made way, feeling that they were in the sacred presence of the Secret of Life.

Birds have no "rights." The male wins and holds his mate by the beauty that is manifest in his life, and by this alone. But man vaunts the proud boast that he has found a better way. He calls his scheme "the crown of Christian civilization." As a matter of expediency I admit the plan has many advantages,

but to say it is perfect is to reveal a dullard's mind. A higher civilization will build on the ruins of this, and a universal sublime attainment will yet come. When it does arrive it must come as every sublime attainment now comes and has ever come, through the conservation of an energy that the respectable mob millions now degrade. But as yet we are like those people of the Eastern plains who consider the chetah, that often devours them, a sacred thing ♣ I have no perfect panacea for human ills. And even if I had I would not attempt to present a system of philosophy between the soup and fish, but this much

I will say: The distinctively modern custom of marital bundling is the doom of chivalry and the death of passion. It often wears all tender sentiment to a napless warp, and no wonder is it that the novelist, without he has a seared and bitter heart, hesitates to follow the couple beyond the church door.



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HERE is no greater reproach to our civilization than the sight of men joking the boy whose heart is pierced by the first rays of a life-giving sun, or of our expecting a girl to blush because she is twice God's child today she was yesterday. Then there is another sin for which we must sometime answer, otherwise Eternal Justice sleeps. And that is our treatment of those who give all for love and perish. For such, all good men and true, and all worthy women who love and are loved again, should have a tenderness such as Christ had when he turned his forgiving eyes to the Magdalen and voiced those three deathless words: **SHE LOVED MUCH.** This is not a sermon, and I have no moral to point save such as he who runs may read; but I will here insert an extract from a certain unpopular novel, and if there is a lesson in it for Society, let the passage speak: "No woman ever loved you as this woman does, this woman whom you have left for fear the world would frown. Have you ever thought what you have done! When you have killed Art in an artist, you have done the cruelest murder that earth can hold. Other and weaker natures than hers might forget, but she—never. Her fame will be short-lived as that of a rose, for she sees but your face, and the world will tire of that but she will not. She can dream no more. She can only remember. Do you know what that is to the artist? it is to be blind, and weary of the world—the world that has no more pity than you have! You think her consoled because her genius has not left her: are you a poet and yet do not know that genius is only a power to suffer more and to remember longer? nothing else. You say to yourself that she will have fame, and that will beguile her, just as the god came to Ariadne. Per-

haps ; but across that fame, let it become what it may, there will settle forever the shadow of the world's dishonor. It will be forever poisoned, and cursed, and embittered by the scorn of fools, and the reproach of women, since by you they have been given their lashes of nettles, and by you they have been given their byword to hoot. She will walk in the light of triumph, you say, and therefore you have not hurt her; do you not see that the fiercer that light may beat upon her, the sharper will the eyes of the world search out the brand with which you have burned her? For when do men forgive power in the woman? and when do women ever forgive a woman's greatness? and when does every cur fail to snarl at the life which is higher than its fellows? It is by the very genius in her that you have such power to wound, such power to blight, such power to destroy. By so long as her name shall be spoken, so long will the wrong you have done her make it meet for reproach. An obscure woman dies and her woe and shame die with her, and the kindly earth covers her and them, but such shelter is denied forever to the woman who has genius and fame; long after she is dead she will lie on common soil, naked and un-housselled, for all the winds to blow upon her and all the carrion birds to tear."

In any old Family Bible may be found headlines over each chapter wherein the reader is briefly told the import of the words that follow. Thus preceeding a certain chapter of the Song of Songs I see: "My beloved means the Almighty; is gone down into his garden, that is to say the Universe; to the beds of spices, meaning Israel; to feed his flocks in the gardens, this means the other nations of the earth; and to gather lilies, these words represent the holy peo-

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ple that the Almighty calls away to place them with his Chosen People. . . . Christ's love for the Church explained; the kisses meaning prayers; Christ directeth the Church," etc., etc. To me the love of man for woman is as sacred a thing as Christ's love for the Church, and all of its attributes are as divine as any of the fantastic hazards of mind. ♣ Indeed, we would know nothing of love did we not see it manifest in man, and the only reason we believe in the love of God is because we find love on earth. The thought of the love of God cannot be grasped in the slightest degree, even as a working hypothesis, by a man who does not know human love. And fully believing that the mysterious desires of body are as much emanations of the Eternal Spirit as the most altruistic of moral promptings, I feel that we are fully justified in waiving all explanations of the theologians, testing the poem before us with the emotions that we ourselves have felt.

Canon Cook in his Commentary gives notes of explanation equal to about twenty-five times the ♣ amount of space the words of the Song occupy. A very earnest effort is made to worm out the "hidden truth" and to show "spiritual light"—all of which shows much learning and great ingenuity. But his finely spun out apology and syllogistic catch and toss are not for us. We leave his nice, sharp quilllets, and sit in silent reverie to sigh and ponder on the fateful chance that saved this glorious barbaric ♣ song from the tooth of Time and the razure of oblivion. Saved only by affixing to it the stamp of Divine Inspiration, so that forever after it should be caught and entangled with the Word of God, which, we are told, is alone able to make us wise unto Salvation! ♣ And after all, have not those Wise Men of Old

builded better than they knew? How else can we reach Heaven save through love? Who ever had a glimpse of the glories that lie beyond the golden portals save in loving moments? For disobedience the man and woman were put out of the garden—they wandered far—and they can only return hand in hand! Yes, this we know: all of man's handiwork that finds form in beauty has its rise in the loves of men and women. Love is vital, love is creative, love is creation. It is love that shapes the plastic clay into forms divinely fair; love carves all statues, writes all poems, paints all the canvases that glorify the walls where color revels, sings all the songs that enchant our ears. Without love the world would only echo cries of pain, the sun would only shine to show us grief, each rustle of the wind among the leaves would be a sigh and all the flowers only fit to garland graves. Love—that curious life-stuff—which holds within itself the spore of all mystic possibilities: that makes alive dull wits, gives the coward heart and warms into being the sodden senses; that gives joy, and gratitude, and rest and hope and peace; shall we not call thee Divine? ❧❧❧

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Although the two characters in this poem go back to times when the earth was young, we see that love had bestowed upon them a wonderful alertness, a clearness of insight and a closeness in observation such as love alone can give. The scene of the poem is laid in the wooded district of Northern Palestine, near the bride's home, where the bridegroom, after the manner of Oriental princes, is spending the summer. According to all writers the lovers have been living together long enough so that all embarrassment has entirely disappeared. The bride has no coyness, affected or otherwise; they are thoroughly well ac-

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quainted. Their love is complete, and consequently their joy in all created things is supreme. This is shown in the fact that although the poem is short, the constant reference to flowers, herbs, trees and landscape tells of walks and talks by light of moon, and of days when summer winds sang gentle love ditties through the souging branches.

And as for flowers, they are essentially lovers' property. Many a good man can allow his thought to go back to a time when love made earth a vast garden of posies. Who but lovers ever botanize? Many is the troth that is plighted over the collector's drum, and indeed, I believe that God made flowers only that lovers might give suitable gifts. "Send me flowers, only flowers, a boquet each morning that shall never cost more than a shilling," wrote the charming Peg Woffington to Sir Henry Vane. And when Mahomet said "If I had but two loaves of bread, I would sell one of them and buy white hyacinths to feed my soul," the sentiment was expressed only for a woman's ear.

The inconsequential quality of the text and the charming inadvertence of the questions and answers are all very lover-like. To lovers all things are of equal importance, and this is the highest sanity. In fact, Kant takes a long chapter to prove that nothing is trivial, nothing is unimportant. Neither is there anything so vital that it should have an exclusive attention. Schleiermacher sums up the case by saying, "Nothing really matters, for all things are of equal value. So far as man is concerned, nothing is worthless, nothing important. Death is as good as life; sleep as activity; silence as speech."


On their walks hand in hand, by field and grove, over hill and dale, across moor and mountain, our lovers


see to the north the towering heights of Lebanon and Amana with the opposing peaks of Sherrin and Hermon; the dens of lions there and the haunts of leopards; the branching cedars and the spreading cypresses, the bright, green flower-enamelled sward. They hear the gentle gurgle of running streams, and breathe deeply of the incense-laden breeze that fans their cheeks. Moving southward to the east of Jordan, they behold Gilead with its trees of healing balm, its flocks and herds feeding in rich valleys; the heights of Bithron, the district of Mahanaim, and toward the west, Carmel with its olive groves, fish pools and cultivated fields. Just beyond is Sharop, where roses clamber over old stone walls, its lowland rich with nodding blossoms, troops of gazelles feeding among the lilies, milk-white doves cooing and sporting by the waterside or hiding in the clefts of the rocks and in the turtle-haunted groves.

Then, turning to the South, our lovers tell of Engedi with its henna plantations, and of Heshbon with its reservoirs. Of the palaces, gardens and well-placed towers of the Royal City, beautiful for situation; but the thought of the city does not satisfy, and they hasten back to the simple pleasures of country life, the vineyard, the orchard and the open field, where all is so free and beautiful, yes, even if the foxes, the little foxes, do come and spoil the tender vines.

Our lovers kept their feet on earth even though their heads were sometimes in the clouds: they were not indifferent to good things eatable and drinkable, for they tell of going into the garden and tasting of pleasant fruits, of mandrakes, apples, grapes and palm nuts, and reference is made to the juice of the pomegranate and the wine, the well-spiced wine. Yet they are not the true children of Nature, for

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when the summer is gone they intend to go to the city, and they anticipate it by references to the Tower of Lebanon that overlooked Damascus, and David's Tower in Jerusalem with its hanging shields, battlements and courtways. They tell of rings and jewels, signets and precious stones, crowns and necklaces, studs of silver and gold, palanquins and chariots, of rich furniture, palaces with pillars of marble, towers of ivory, and of various kinds of spice and costly perfume 

And because these luxurious things are mentioned the Wise Men have never for a moment doubted but that the lover was a king. Yet when we think of the lavish richness that love lends the imagination, there is no good reason why a pair of rustics having talked a bit with travelers and listened to the tales told by those who yearly went to market, could not have reared the whole fabric right out of their hearts  I do not say positively that this was so, but like the preacher already referred to who told of the Golden Calf, I say there is no proof it was not.

And now behold that while love is the mainspring of all animate Nature, and without it the earth would be shrouded in hopeless night; and while under its benign influence the human lover is transformed, and for him, for the first time the splendors of the earth are manifest and the wonders of the stars revealed—finding good in everything—possessing a key to the mysteries of the Universe that before he wist not of, right here man halts and hesitates. He does not go on. Either his capacities limit, or else Society thrusts him back, and our so-called Enlightened Age grins at him and says in hoarse guttural, "You are a fool!" and he, being one, believes it.

Of course I do not pretend to fathom the meaning of

all the inferences in this poem : doubtless much of it is just simple love prattle that the lovers alone understood, for lovers dote on curious ways to communicate. Forsooth, I doubt me not it was lovers who first formed an alphabet ! Lovers are hopelessly given over to mysteries and secrecy, to signs and omens and portents ; they carry meanings further and spin out the thread of suggestion to a fineness that scowling philosophers can never follow ♣ And thus I think that I am safe in saying the remarks in the poem addressed to third persons are merely monologue and interjectory exclamations, day- ♣ dreams and love musings, in which young men and maidens ever revel. No man can tell exactly what the twittering of the bluebirds means, nor can he logically interpret the chirping of the chickadees, and I am very sure that I cannot explain the significance of the song the robin sings to his lost mate from the top of a tall poplar tree when the sun goes down. But these things are very beautiful, and even when you think of them, perhaps when you are alone at the twilight hour, the holy, unbidden tears will start. ♣ It is pitiful, wondrous pitiful that the Magic Wand of Nature suddenly breaks, and that doubt, conflict and division enter where unconscious harmony erst-while prevailed ! Today death stares and devils dance where but yester noon white hyacinths bloomed to feed the lovers' souls. And the note of warning and the last word of counsel that the priest gives is often summed up in the barren formula, " Bear and forbear." Do you say that I place too much importance on the Divine Passion ? I say to you that man has not sufficient imagination to exaggerate the importance of Love. It is as high as the heavens, as deep as hell, as sublime as the stars and great as the gal-

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axy of worlds that fade on our feeble vision into mere milky-ways. Love holds within her ample space all wrecks, all ruins, all grief, all tears; and all the smiles, and sunshine and beauty that mortals know are each and all her priceless gifts, and hers alone. **God of Mercy, whose name is Love! Look Thou upon us and in pity pluck from our hearts that deep-rooted unbelief, and that miring uncleanliness of thought that causes us yet as a people to learn from the lips of vice and stupid ignorance our knowledge of the most vital and profound and potential of all human faculties! Through love—for there is no other way—lead us back to love and light, so that like the flowers, the tendrils of our hearts may draw from Thee those delicate perfumes of inspiration and rich harmonies of color that alone give beauty and proportion to our thoughts and acts. We have wandered far, but hearken Thou unto us, for we thirst and are never quenched, our hearts hunger and are never satisfied, we cry and the heavens are but brass! God of Mercy, we beseech Thee to hear us, and in pity bring us back, through love, to Thee!**





**THE BOOK
OF ECCLESIASTES**



VI.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

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IN THE Book of Ecclesiastes, as in all other works of genius, we see strongly mirrored the human qualities of inconsistency and contradiction. The man is not writing for publication; he has no ambitious idea that he is writing for immortality. Forsooth! most authors are like farmers in a photograph gallery—very different persons from the awkward men in shirt-sleeves who so gracefully toss the golden sheaves over the cross-beams into the mow ♣ In Shakespeare there is a careless quality which shows that of whatsoever he wrote he never blotted a line. And although we say with Ben Jonson, would he had blotted a ♣ thousand, the work lives and is deathless on account of its very imperfections. A lawyer's brief, a malefactor's defense, a shopkeeper's advertisement, may be perfect and complete, but their author's motives are ulterior, and like all other selfish things that strive to clutch and hold, they are ephemeral and live the length of life of a moth. Only second-rate men have exalted aims. The great of earth simply endeavor to do their work, not to be great. They meet each problem of life as it presents itself, cheerfully, bravely, manfully, be the duty high or low. The great navigator dies in innocent ignorance of the fact that he has discovered a continent. Darwin loved Truth with

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a high and holy passion, and wot not as he wrote, that he was working a revolution in the thought that had been many hundred years crystalizing. Had the author of *The Tempest* been told that his name would go thundering down the ages as the greatest literary name of all time he would have been staggered with incredulity.

And thus it has come about that a goodly portion of the world's great books are posthumous publications. Their authors either did not expect their words would be published to the world, or else they purposely provided that the work should not be issued until their hands could receive no royalty, their ears hear no applause and their eyes observe no menace. Add to these the books written behind prison bars by men who had neither hope of reward nor fear for censure, and we have no small per cent of the classics.

The ingenuous honesty of *Ecclesiastes* stamps the work as great literature. Men rarely confide their perplexities to the world. They fear being misunderstood; they dread the accusation of weakness, and so assume a swashing and martial outside, justifying themselves in the position by the thought that the good of humanity demands it. Yet we deceive no one but ourselves—although our example doubtless does make hypocrites—for the manner put on for a specific intent does not convince, and the book written with anxious purpose is made from paper, and to the paper mill it soon returns.

To me the Book of *Ecclesiastes* is simply the Journal of a man who has lived long and studied much; who has traveled and observed and meditated; who has tasted of all the so-called pleasures of life. And now he has played the game to its limit, and Old

Age plucking him by the sleeve, he recognizes that he is about to quit. We catch him off his guard and hear him talking aloud ~~to~~

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The old man's mind is in undress, not criticising itself or hampered by the consciousness of having to submit to the criticism of others. For however easy and familiar conversation or correspondence between friends may be, there is usually something of the play-actor entangled in it ~~is~~

No man allows his thoughts to appear in dressing gown and slippers, save with the wife of his bosom, and she never tells his best, because she can't translate it, even if she would. Conversation is comment and criticism on things external: very, very rarely does it rise to self-revelation or soul confession. Talleyrand was right: words were invented that men might conceal their thoughts, and the purpose has never been forgotten.

Just as the vital organs of the body are placed by Nature in a position where they cannot be trifled with, so we unconsciously guard the holy of holies against assault. The greatest egotist has his reticences. It is only during the sessions of sweet silent thought that a man can summon his soul to judgment. Not even then is he always quite sincere or free from pose, for we view our acts as a passing procession, in which we proudly march, and even into the deepest seclusion we carry somewhat of this strange dualism of character. The average man plays to the gallery of his own self-esteem; but Kohleth, being more than an average man, may sometimes be dramatic, though he is never theatric.

Comedy and tragedy have the same source, differing only in degree or depending on one's point of view. A small lack of right adjustment causes laughter—a great one sobs and tears. Sympathy and accurate

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judgment form the base of humor, and we see that Koheleth appreciates that "there is a time to laugh." A subtle touch of wit comes in now and again, and a gentle sarcasm plays its part in softening the sombreness of the whole. Thus again do we see the master mind; for as pure comedy does not satisfy, so the tragedy of life without its smiles is too concentrated for us to endure; its departure from truth too great for us to forgive. In the most intense scene of the most intense tragedy ever written, the tipsy porter appears just before the breaking strain is reached—we laugh and the play is saved. Laughter has a certain proportioned relation to tears, and unless this relativity is shown in literature the lines come tardy off. But the relationship must be easy and natural and glide lightly from one condition to another. These dual or multiple qualities mark the work of all strong men.

A cheerful resignation is always heroic; but no phase of life is so pathetic as a forced optimism. A Mark Tapley is the most depressing of companions, and the man who hopes against hope is not only gradually sinking, but he is pulling others down with him. Hope pushed to the other side is only cowardice. In all riot of the senses, whether the agent be opium or religious zeal, the punishment is dire and relentless. For the man who believes in a heaven of perfect bliss also believes in a hell of abject torment; so unless his heart be hopelessly seared, his peace is broken by the clank of an ever lengthening chain. Or if higher up the scale, his heaven be not a place but "a condition of complete harmony," gained by the denial of the existence of matter, there is still the belief in a perdition of discord for those who think otherwise, and the result is a smooth and ironed com-

placency, bereft of pity, that is fatal to all advancement. The ostrich's plan of disposing of difficulties is not without its disadvantages.

Then there is a sort of skyeey metaphysics that is unlike charity, being exceedingly puffed up. It always has an answer ready. It claps its calipers to science, art or philosophy without warning, and reasons high, finding meanings, portents, proofs where'er it lists. Whatever is not in accordance with its preconceived predilections is boldly argued down, or calmly waived, or smiled away. Through its nimble alchemy it extracts sunbeams from cucumbers, or resolves the gold of experience into vapor by the breath of its mouth. Pressed too closely, like the ink-fish, it clouds its slippery form in misty, meaningless words. Beware of these mazy, hazy, hotly arguing philosophers who twist and distort all the beautiful things of earth into "proof." ♣ They love not Truth; they only pander to a Sect.

And knowing these things, down deep in our hearts, we crown with laurel the literature that contains the honest doubt. Hamlet is a vast interrogation point; Faust is a guess; the Divine Comedy a dream; and Abt Vogler, alb-clad, amice-tired and stoled with the sacred tippet, is carried on the wings of music free and clear of all the ensnaring fixity of faith.



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A SCORE or more of learned men have written at appalling length concerning the Book of Ecclesiastes, and various violent efforts have been made to show a consistent continuity in the thought. Indeed, the most flagrant fault of the theologians has ever been an attempt to get more out of literature than there is in it. Thus one man with ingenious argument proves the book to be a dialogue, and the contradictory character of the text is accounted for by the hypothesis that two men are talking. The inventor of this suggestion seemingly being all forgetful of the fact that man is a dual creature and asks himself questions all day long. A learned Bishop in the Seventeenth Century publishes a lengthy treatise proving that originally the book was written on very small pages; and in a high wind these leaves were carried out of the window and then collected haphazard and "copied by a woman or foolish person." ❀ Others still have held that it is the mere babbling of a demented old man; defeated in his life's aspirations, discouraged and waiting for death, he recalls but snatches of the wisdom that once animated him. Still another school holds to the belief that the work is a symposium ❀ But one thing is plain, and that is that the lines giving the authorship to the son of David are an interpolation by some one possessed of the popular belief that "Solomon was the wisest man that ever was," and therefore more likely to have written the book than any one else. Nor is the plan of attaching the names of famous men to the work of obscure authors wholly without precedent.

Canon Cook calls our attention to the fact that the much discussed first verse does not affirm that Solomon was the writer; it merely says "the son of

David," and thus the actual author is relieved from the accusation that he is telling a falsehood: a bit of pious evasion that surely merits our admiration. To meet the objection that the work contains forms that are purely Aramaic or Chaldean and therefore unknown to Solomon, a writer in Smith's Bible Dictionary says that such knowledge probably was obtained by Solomon from his "strange wives." And this writer, who possesses an acumen quite beyond the average biblical student, naively suggests that the vast extent of Solomon's wisdom is only to be accounted for by taking into account that he was much married. It is very true that Solomon had many wives and that in his household there were women "from all the nations 'round about." In fact, whenever Solomon heard of a beautiful and highly intelligent woman he sent for her and she was brought to the court and legally married to him. That the great wisdom of Solomon was derived from his wives is very naturally inferred by Smith. The learned Dr. Pusey also seems to hold this view. But the man who wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes had not been benefitted by women. There are, and always have been, as many good women on earth as good men, but the kind Koheleth knew were the wrong sort. Men judge women by those with whom they have been intimate. Koheleth is a man with a "past," but a limited past, and his experience with women has stranded his faith in femininity: "One man among a thousand have I found, but a woman among all those have I not found." Long years before some chit of a maid played battledore with his heart and he cannot forget it. How pitifully human! Small men understand women and are able to cope with caprice, but the guileless great fall an easy prey to the de-

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signing ☞ The absence of a Hebrew original caused the book to be excluded from the Jewish canon, but Preston avers that the first verse declares it was written by Solomon, and "if we reject the truth of this statement we doubt the literal accuracy of Scripture, and this no man has a right to do." To this Smith files a rejoinder to the effect that men are only inspired once in a while, and although Solomon did write the book it was in one of his "off" periods ☞ The Book of Ecclesiastes, in point of philosophic insight and literary quality, is by far the most valuable book of the Bible. In these thoughts of the Prophet there is mingled an undefinable element of the writer's personality: the strong, well-poised independence of the man who is convinced of his kinship with the Divine: of one who, feeling his footsteps mortised and tenoned in granite, knows the amplitude of time. He does not strive to be explicit, to make his philosophy synthetic, to convert or to proselyte. As in all sublime oratory there is a dash of indifference to the opinions of the audience, so in great literature there is a quality that says with Browning, "I do not write for you." And thus we behold that egotism which is the soul of Art.

Mendelssohn says, "The Wise Men sought to secrete the book Koheleth because they found in it words tending to heresy;" but later the Wise Men bring in a report that "on closer examination we have discovered a meaning in it." But it was provided that no man under thirty years of age should be allowed to read it. Between the schools of Shammai and Hillel a bitter controversy arose as to whether the book was inspired or not, and a running fight has been continued down the centuries on the same question. Even in our day men have arisen who deny

its inspiration. But it seems to me that if we admit that "inspiration" exists at all we must accord it here.

♣ Our highest civilization today may be likened to a river made by the uniting of two streams: the Grecian and the Judaic. That which is antique in life and letters is Mediæval; that which is modern is pre-Christian. The philosophy of Koheleth is Greek overcast with the sombre-ness of the Hebrew. A consensus of the best scholarship seems to agree that the unknown author was a Jew who lived about the second century before Christ; a Jew who had drunk deep at the Pierian Spring, and who was no longer an Israelite ~~was~~

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For at the last no man who does his own thinking is an "ite." Outwardly he may subscribe to this creed or that, and if he be very discreet he may make his language conform, but inwardly his belief is never pigeon-holed, nor is his soul labeled. In theology the great man recoils at the thought of an exact geometrical theorem, for he knows its vanity; and all algebraic formulæ in our sublime moments are cast away.

♣ There will doubtless be a certain general mental drift or tendency in a thinker, but until one abandons his reason, and bar- ters his birthright for a mess of assuring pottage, his belief is in a state of flux, and sedimentation does not take place. It is a low grade of intellect that expects to corral truth in a "scheme" or to hold it secure in a "system."



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DEAN STANLEY has beautifully said: "Ecclesiastes is an interchange of voices—higher and lower, mournful and joyful, hopeless and hopeful, within a single human soul.

. . . Every speculation of the human heart is heard and expressed and recognized in turn." The sublime fantasies of thought continually baffle and perplex: the prophet sends filament after filament swaying out into the darkness of the Unknown. Sometimes he thinks the thread catches and holds and that he is in communication with Another World, but the spell does not endure. For on the morrow the sun rises calm and resplendent and reveals the great enigma of the world anew, and though he listen ever so closely at the lips of the Sphinx yet she gives no answer to his questionings save the systole and diastole of his throbbing heart.

The words of Koheleth have always held a fascination for every true lover of Letters. Perhaps it would be difficult to explain why the literature of Indifferentism holds its place against all inroads of that which is professedly purposeful. But one thing is sure, and that is that the sublime tragedy of Hamlet will never be replaced by any modern melodrama with a domestic moral. The fate that catches the feet of the honest Dane in its relentless mesh is as cruel as that which puts a quietus on his guilty mother, or her partner in murder, the King. The contemplation of the hopeless fight, whether of Leonidas at Thermopylæ, Horatius at the Bridge, or Custer at the Little Big Horn, does not sink us in despondency. Rather it gives us courage, and like the survivors of the Jeannette when they stood on the ice and saw the pennant on the main mast of their gallant ship swallowed in the crevasse, we pull our belts one hole

tighter and give three cheers for the flag that surrenders only because it must.

Those prisoners of "Ninety-three" awaiting death in the Luxembourg were a merry lot. Without tears they kissed their companions who were about to be led away to the scaffold, and one of the men so soon to die said, "Be brave, comrades. I'll see God in an hour and tell him how things are mixed down here—he surely has forgotten you!" And does melancholy lure us because we unconsciously feel that we, like the prisoners of the Luxembourg, are awaiting a time when our loved ones shall be led away, or we from them, and that there is no hope of reprieve? Is it because we know that life is a tragedy and for us the fifth act of the play will surely end in death? And do we laugh because in our sanest moments we know that death is as natural as life and a deal kinder? ♣

Mr. William McIntosh has said: "To be born and to die is the record of existence to which all else is tributary. The pangs of birth and death thrill all the poet strains: only the tragedy that sweeps along the strings lives to echo in human hearts. It is the deathless minor chord that distinguishes the melody of true poetry from the dancing cadences of rhyme in all literature. This undertone is the soul in all song, in verse or in the unmeasured periods of epic prose."

♣ Social discontent is plainly set forth by Koheleth; it is the burden of much of his Journal. And in the iteration "that the profit of the earth is for all," that all wealth comes from "the field," that man is entitled to "the fruits of his labor," he voices a cry that is startlingly modern. Since history began men have held to the thought that "the former days were better than these." This old man two thousand years ago heard that sentiment expressed until he was

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awearry. He denies it flatly. No one knows better than he that care rides on the crupper: it always has and ever will. He knows that there is no such thing as a "New Year;" it is only the old year come back.

♣ The burden of the Preacher's thought seems to be: We are unable fully to reconcile the events of life with any satisfactory theory of the government of the Universe. Let us be frank: For all we know, this life is the sum of existence for us; there is no proof of a future life. True, we feel a certain confidence in Eternal Justice, and loving our friends we hope to meet them again after death ♣ But God's ways are past finding out, and all we can do is to make the best of this condition that surrounds us. Whenever any good comes our way let us enjoy it to the fullest. It is better to be absolutely honest and admit that we do not know. Speak today what you think is true and contradict it all tomorrow if necessary. Of all things avoid excesses. "Be not righteous overmuch," he says, but recognize that a line of conduct that may be right under one condition may be evil when pushed on too far.

Our author does not believe in iron bound rules of conduct. In several places he suggests the thought that common sense is a form of godliness, and that in the last analysis wisdom and virtue are synonymous; and that whatever is wise cannot but be good. He never loses his belief in the Universal Intelligence that governs the world. At times the light of his faith seems to be feeble, but the flame never dies. He dis-sents entirely from the stupid ecclesiastic doctrine that material riches are the reward of righteousness, and he also sees clearly the patent fact that the best and purest souls often suffer most, while baseness and flaunting pride go free.

This he feels is an injustice—he cannot understand it. If God is just, why does he allow the weak to perish and misery to continue, or is even Elohim powerless in the matter? The pains of the world press upon him; and like many great and lofty souls he is thus robbed of the joyousness that otherwise might be his. Through the thought of the grief that others endure, he suffers, a condition often referred to and recently emphasized best perhaps in the life of the illustrious Phillips Brooks. In this sombre intensity of feeling Koheleth shows the influence of his Jewish ancestry. He makes no claim of being one of the Lord's Anointed, and his sympathy is not centered in Israel; it embraces mankind. And it is this superior strength of moral fibre combined with a directness of insight into existing conditions which, together with its wistful unswerving honesty, makes the book so valuable to us. The precepts of Koheleth are few and simple; they belong to the domain of Natural Religion: Do the duty that lies nearest thee and leave the future to God. Our times are in His hand.

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THE BOOK OF JOB

VII.

THE BOOK OF JOB.

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THE Book of Job in point of merit disputes first place in the Bible with Ecclesiastes. In some ways it is more valuable than Ecclesiastes, being written by a younger man, one in whom the love of life still held firm place

His experience had not been so wide and he knew not the world as did the Preacher, but his wit and insight are saving virtues that only the strong possess. Job and Ecclesiastes must ever be regarded as the only two books in the Bible that have a distinct literary value. Others are certainly useful in parts, but they are so overrun with intent and assumption and absurdity that they cannot be placed by impartial scholars in the same category with the two books named. Job is the oldest book of the Bible and also the oldest of all books that we of the Western world possess. It is very probable that the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Assyrians and ancient Greeks had a literature as complete in poetry and philosophy as our own. In fact we have fragments of the works of various poets that have been passed down only by word of mouth, stored up in memory, and then quoted by later writers—Sappho for instance. But how many more have been lost from off the face of earth we can only guess. And all this through just one impulse that has ever been strong in the heart of barbaric man: the desire of the conqueror to eradicate all trace of the conquered. The defeated must be made to forget the past. Records on rocks, monoliths, in caves; and the sombre story of buried cities turned to dust, alone

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give us a pieced-out history of our brothers who once lived. Man's chief efforts have ever been to destroy. His highest talent until yesterday has been in the line of obliteration ♪

And Moses, too, great as he was, destroyed city after city—wiped them off the face of creation, leaving not a wrack behind. And then he proceeded to set the pace for all jesuits by calmly backing himself up thus: God told me to do it. Seventy-nine times he says, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying" . . . The Romans tumbled the splendid marbles of Greece from their pedestals, so only fragments have reached us, and the flames turned to tongueless smoke the papyrus rolls and painted walls and pictured tapestries. St. Paul exultingly tells of burning all books of magic found in Ephesus. What is a book of magic? There is no such thing from pole to pole or horizon to antipodes ♪ Books of science are always called books of magic by those who do not understand them. ♪ Astronomers died, and hidden beneath their pillows were found the records of their work—saved from the flames, but only for a day. Bonfires made of books have glared the blue of heaven in every city of Christendom; and in London over Smithfield Market has hovered the smoke of martyr fires, while at the feet of dying men crackled their books. Napoleon burned ten thousand copies of Madame De Stael's *De l'Allemagne*, and also paid several other authors the same compliment ♪

When I mixed acid with an alkali for the amusement of certain Sioux Indians, they called me wizard and spoke of my harmless experiment as devil magic: evil spirits ever being considered more powerful than just. Had Thomas Edison lived a few hundred years ago and pressed the button, the clergy would have

done the rest ☞ And only the other day in Boston a mob beat in the doors of a printing shop owned by one William Lloyd Garrison and trampled his proofs and tools and type in the mire of the streets. At the same time at Alton, Illinois, a man was printing a periodical devoted to freeing the human race, and for him the rope and torch did their ruthless work. The State of New York now has a law providing for the burning of certain books that the courts may deem immoral ☞ And this grim tendency to destroy was recognized thousands of years ago, hence historians sometimes made their records in cipher, hoping thus to escape attention, as has been so clearly shown by Dr. and Madame Le Plongeon in their books written after a twelve years' sojourn in the wilds of Yucatan. But adown the centuries has come to us, past flame and fagot, through blood and death, the Book of Job ☞ Oldest among all written records of the thoughts of men, preserved only by the fortuitous circumstance that linked it with books said to be dictated by God, it binds us with the past by asking the same questions that now baffle and perplex us. The author of *Les Miserables* could repeat from memory the entire Book of Job. He declared it to be the strongest piece of poetry ever produced: calling up in the mind more images, suggesting further reaches, sounding greater depths in the human heart. The creator of Jean Valjean had a hearty sympathy for the creator of Job, both being exiles. There is a certain similarity in Valjean and Job; both are fictitious, yet each has been declared historic. In Paris a guide showed me the stone wall through which Jean Valjean dug and escaped, and in Ezekiel XIV, 14th, we read of Noah, Daniel and Job as if they all had been living men. Not long ago I heard a teacher of litera-

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ture rebuke a scholar for doubting that Macbeth ever existed and the young man was referred to Clarke as proof. And as for Hamlet, he is as real to us as Julius Cæsar whom we know chiefly thro' Shakspeare's play which is founded on Plutarch, who was prince of romanticists, as Emerson has told us. When we get to Heaven if all these fine fellows who never lived except in books are not there, it will be a lonely place, cursed with a monotonous felicity.

The position of Moses in the Court of Pharaoh was not pleasant. He was versed in all the Egyptian mysteries and yet was not allowed to teach the Israelites to whom his heart went out. In many ways the Hebrews were superior to the Egyptians, and no one knew this better than Moses. And once when he found an Egyptian abusing a Hebrew his blood boiled and with spirit he took up the quarrel and killed the oppressor. He did not intend to commit murder—it was all done in the heat of passion. He tried to hide the body in the sand, but finding he was discovered fled the country.

He was forty years of age then, and it was forty years before he came back; and when he returned it was to lead his people out of captivity. The story of how he did it is interesting; but not more so than his bold assertions that he was in constant communication with Jehovah. And had we time it might be profitable to trace the wise sanitary laws promulgated by Moses, and his management of this childish people; but all we shall deal with now is a certain book that Moses wrote when he was in exile in Arabia. This book is the Book of Job.

The Book of Job has been preserved for us all down the ages with Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, also written by Moses. Of course

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I know that many good men do not believe Moses wrote the Book of Job. They say that Job wrote it. Just as one might insist that Hamlet wrote the play because it bears his name. Others say that it could not have been written by Job because the book records the death of Job; which reason of itself need not weigh i' the scale simply because Moses gives an account of his own death in the last chapter of Deuteronomy. In good sooth, I myself have written a book in which I give an account of my death. About all the argument that these worthy men who do not believe Moses wrote the Book of Job bring to bear is that Job contains not a single allusion to the Hebrew people or to Hebrew customs. It makes no note of seraphim or cherubim, ark of the covenant, tables of stone, or the ten thousand minute directions provided for the management of the Israelites. Then it contains nearly a hundred pure Arabic words interspersed among the Hebrew; and besides it is in style and treatment totally different from all other books of the Bible. Let no man be troubled by these statements.

Moses was a man of fine literary instincts; he was also a philosopher and a poet. He wrote this book out of his heart, long before the exode, over there in the Desert of Arabia. At that time he was speaking the Arabic and Chaldean languages and very naturally introduced many Arabic and Chaldean words. He did not write the book for a purpose. He does not try to convince any one or to prove anything. He follows the natural dramatic method, best worked out in recent times by Robert Browning. That is to say, he introduces certain characters and lets each speak for himself concerning the greatest questions that have ever vexed the souls of men; the very questions

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we are asking now ; the very questions men have asked since thought became our heritage.



ROR instance, I am today trying to follow the Moral Law, which law I somehow blindly feel is the Law of God. I follow to the best of my ability—trying to treat all men justly. And yet there comes a day when I return to my home and find only smoking ruins ; my riches fly ; my servants sicken ; my children grow weary and find rest only in the grave ; disease seizes upon me and gnaws into my very vitals, and at last I cry aloud in pain and perplexity, My God ! my God ! what have I done to merit all this misery ?

Who are ye that have lived to man's estate and have not heard this cry of anguish ! aye, who are ye that have not voiced it !

That's all ; and Moses simply lets five men, one woman, God and the Devil tell what they know about it. What do they know ? Nothing—the question is dropped where we first found it. Nothing is revealed, no new light is shed. None of the characters know any more than Moses. All speak with the degree of ignorance, or assurance, or platitude, or wisdom becoming their station. None are wiser than Job himself, not even God, for in the play all God does is to ask questions ; He answers not one. And further, Job was Moses, for every author is the hero of his tale. Make no mistake—when he pictures a man that is wise and good that man is himself or the person he is striving to be.

The books written behind prison bars, by men in forced exile and by those who paid the penalty of honest expression by death, largely inspire earth's

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highest thought: The world's Saviors are often society's outcasts. And so if I mention somewhat of the details of Moses' life, I do so, not because we are especially interested in the history of a man dead these four thousand years, but because I would add a mite of proof to the Fact which only the foolish deny: There's a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will.

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Moses wrote the book out there on the plains in exile; plenty of time to think—no one to harass—no one to fear—no one to flatter—no one to please. He called up these puppets of his brain and asked them questions, and they talked like talkative witnesses who have no real evidence to give. There is no purpose in the work, no wish to prove that this is true and that false. And just here you get the secret of its power; there is in it no violence of direction. It belongs to the Ways that go to Nowhere and the Steps that lead to Nothing. It is Suggestive Art, and its merit lies in the fact that it makes you think. Genesis and Exodus were written for a purpose; they pretend to be finalities. They are children's books—written down to the level of people who had only the child-understanding. For the growth of the child mirrors the growth of the race. "How did the world begin—who was the first man—why do we have to work?" asked those foolish people all in a mouthful, fresh from slavery. "I'll tell you," said Moses with a weary smile. And then he wrote the Book of Genesis. And the Book of Genesis satisfied them. It satisfied me until I was ten years old; it satisfied you for a time; and when I tell my little girl about the First Man and the First Woman who lived in a Beautiful Garden and were perfectly happy until they disobeyed God, she says, "Oh, why didn't they mind

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what He said?" And then she throws her arms about my neck and assures me that she will always do just what I wish her to. So she confuses me with Deity, and gives us the first hint of Ancestor Worship, for I am the biggest and strongest man she knows. Every one obeys me: goodness, they have to—well, I guess so! So when she is told that her little brother was found by the doctor under a cabbage leaf and that Santa Claus is a jolly old man with white whiskers who gives pretty things once a year to all good children, she believes it.

Some day I will tell her better. I shall not leave her to grope, and gain her knowledge of the most sacred and profound secrets of life from the lips of stupid ignorance and sin. And as the years go by and count themselves with the eternity that lies behind, I shall not be here; and she will do as I have done and as you have done—stand by an open grave and ask in anguish, "If a man die shall he live again?" And the falling clods will give no sign and the winds that sigh through the trees will make no reply: but hope and love will answer, yes.



THE Prologue to the Book of Job gives us a hint of the facts on which the drama is based. Job is a rich grazer in a sparsely settled country; this country, however, is traversed by the caravan trail that connects Egypt with Assyria and Greece, and so the life of our chieftain is touched with a little of the splendor of the cities. Job has servants and books and costly robes and many fine trappings. He is a judge and a prince, and in times past has been a warrior and with strong arm repelled the invader.

In New Mexico and Southern California you could find just such rich men yesterday; men who meted

out life and death to whomsoe'er they list ♣ They lived in a sort of barbaric splendor, having everything of a material sort that is supposed to make life complete ♣ In the book are allusions to courts of judicature, written indictments, regular forms of procedure; and an interest is also shown in the arts and sciences. There are various references to astronomical observations, to the movements of the wind, the coming of rain, drought, and the influence of sun and moon. We also read hints of great buildings and mining operations, of ruined sepulchres, showing that the world was then old; and throughout there are many references to the arts and the industries of Egypt ~~etc~~

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And so lived Job: rich in material things; happy in taking a lively interest in all that pertained to the advancement of the race. His wife seems to have been good natured, and his sons and daughters, grown to man's estate, were happy and prosperous. They gave feasts, inviting one another; and pious old Job attended these feasts and blessed all present ♣ Now, why could not fate have left this strong, benevolent and happy old man alone? Why badger him, and provoke him, and smite him? That's the question—why does fate badger and perplex me? And so the prologue ends and a premonitory ting-a-ling-a-ling tells us that the curtain is about to roll up on the world's first play
—a miracle
play.



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WITH Scene One the curtain rolls up and two characters come upon the stage—Jehovah from one side and Satan from the other. Satan is just the same Mephisto that we see in Faust; a man no longer young and yet not old; fine, strong features, a glint in his bright eye and a half smile showing his white teeth, and jaunty good nature. He is powerful, surely, nearly as powerful as God. He is a joker. God is first to break the silence:

“ Whence comest thou ? ” ❀

Satan looks up, affects surprise, smiles and replies : “ From going to and fro in the land, and from walking up and down in it ! ”

We do not have God’s reply to this evasion, but He seems to assume that Satan’s walking up and down in the land was simply to make mischief; and to show Satan that there is still one good man loyal to Himself, He proudly says:

“ Hast thou considered my servant Job ? For there is none like him on the earth, a perfect and an upright man, fearing God and ❀ avoiding evil ! ”

Satan gives a toss of his head that shakes the single red feather in his cap, and musing, slowly asks this very pointed question :

“ Doth Job fear God for naught ? ”

We hear the question asked every day about good

people. Why is he good? Why, he's good so he can secure this, that and the other—he's on the lookout for number one. Honesty is the best policy, said the sagacious Franklin. And after all, is not goodness a form of selfishness, since men are good only that they may secure a reward?

God doesn't like the saucily suggestive answer of the man in the red cloak, and sharply challenges him to undo Job if he can : ♣ "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power, only against himself stretch not forth thy hand."

Satan slyly winks one eye at the audience and walks ♣ slowly off the stage as the curtain falls.



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IN SCENE TWO there is a feast at the house of Job's eldest son ♣ It is a gay party of strongmen and handsome women: the wine goes 'round and song and laughter fill the tent. Job, beloved by all, sits somewhat apart in the seat of honor. In the midst of the revelry a messenger enters in hot haste. For an instant he cannot speak. Silence falls upon the company. The messenger manages to gasp: "The oxen were ploughing, and the she asses were feeding beside them. And the Sabeans fell upon them and took them away; and the young men they have smitten with the edge of the sword—and I only am escaped to tell thee!"

Job stands erect, casts off his cloak and reaches for his spear. There is a look of fine defiance on his flushed face. He has met these Sabeans before in open fight and whipped them, and now they have sought revenge by this stealthy attack on his unarmed servants and herdsmen. The young men understand and the quick preparations for pursuit are interrupted by another messenger, even more flurried than the first.

"Well?" says Job impatiently. And the messenger finding his tongue exclaims:

"The lightnings fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the young men—and I only am escaped to tell thee!"

For an instant Job forgets his purpose to pursue the Sabeans. He stands irresolute, but it is only for a second ♣ He motions the messenger to begone and

calls on his sons and servants to follow him. But ere they can take three strides a third messenger dashes in, exclaiming: "The Chaldeans have rushed upon the camels and carried them away; and the young men they have smitten with the edge of the sword—and I only am escaped to tell thee!"

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Job puts his hands to his head in a bewildered way, but ere he can shape his course a fourth messenger arrives and cries: ☸ "Thy sons and daughters were eating and drinking; and behold a vehement wind came across the desert and smote the four corners of the house and it fell upon the young people and they are dead—and I only am escaped to tell thee!"

☸ The Sabeans are forgotten—the marauding Chaldeans are as naught—the lesser troubles are all swallowed up by the greater. Job thinks only of his sons and daughters that are lying dead, their young lives crushed out by the falling house. He rends his clothing, and falling to the ground in an attitude of worship says in a voice that struggles hard to be calm: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away! Blessed be the name of the Lord."

The company stand about horror-stricken. Several of the women embrace each other in frenzied grief; the men are dumb with doubt and fear;

Job is still on his knees, his eyes raised

to heaven, and as the curtain rolls

slowly down, back in the shadow

from between the folds of the

tent we detect a leering

face, above it a single

tall feather, and ☸

catch the glim-

mer of a red

cloak.

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HE stage in Scene Three has the same setting as in Scene One. As the curtain rolls up God enters ♣ from one side and Satan saunters in from the other. God speaks first : " Whence comest thou ? "

♣ Satan affects surprise, and answers : " From going to and fro in the land and walking up and down in it ! " ❧❧

God has a mingled fear and contempt for this character to whom He is talking and ill conceals it when He asks abruptly : " Hast thou considered my servant Job ? For there is none like him on the earth, a perfect and upright man, fearing God and avoiding evil ; and still holdeth he fast his integrity, altho' thou didst move me against him to destroy him without cause. "


♣ Satan gives a shrug and replies : " Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life ! "

As much as to say, why, so long as a man has life and health what difference is it ! ♣ Can't a strong man like Job retrieve his fortune ? and as for his children—bless me !

he can raise more. Leave a man strength and health and of course he stands firm. " But stretch forth thy hand now and touch his bone and flesh, he will then indeed renounce thee to thy face ! " And the Lord replies with the significant challenge : " He is in thy power—only spare his life. "



IN SCENE FOUR the stage setting is very dismal. Darkness seems to obscure the equatorial sun; the heat is stifling; through the dim light we perceive Job sitting on a pile of dirt and ashes in the rear of his house—a muck-pile where all the refuse was heaped. What a complete reversal of the glowing light and splendor in which we saw him at the feast! He wears no purple robe now, no vestments of shotted silver and 'broidered gold, no jewel-hilted dagger in his belt, on his brow no fillet of honor. As our eyes become accustomed to the smoky light we perceive that the man is nearly naked and his body covered with horrible sores. He has purposely gone out of the house to prevent pollution of the place—his presence is intolerable to others. To stay the frightful itching of the ulcers on his body he scrapes himself, as he crouches there, with a potsherd.

We turn our heads in pity, unable longer to endure the sickening sight—but hearing a woman's voice we again look. Yes, there is a woman—stout, matronly and practical. She stands at a distance, in the door of the tent, and calls to the stricken man. This is what she says: 

“Dost thou still retain thy integrity? Curse God and die!”

And Job answers back with a touch of petulance that is pardonable:

“Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speak. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not receive evil?”

The woman bites her lips, for the dignity and the manliness of this old derelict of Fate have not yet departed. She wishes it were otherwise—why can he not die? As it is he is a curse to himself and to oth-

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ers, and yet—and yet— She stammers and tries to formulate a reply. But ere her words reach us three strangers appear—prosperous, intelligent merchants. They have come from a distance by appointment to visit their old friend and comfort him in his affliction

Before they can enter the house to inquire for the sick man, they see this hideous apparition on the dung-heap. They stop aghast and look at each other in perplexity. The lazy summer breeze bears to them a sickening smell and they step back and stare and stare again. It is some moments before it comes to them that this putrid remains of a man is all there is left of their old neighbor.

They cry aloud in anguish—they thought he was merely ill and that they could sit by his bedside, holding his hands, and console him—they dare not approach; and rending their garments they fall to the ground and weep. Their grief is very great. Woman's tears can move men; but the grief of woman is as naught to the grief that causes strong men to shake with emotion. The calamity that has come to Job is too great for words—imagination can not conjure forth a condition more awful. It is worse than death, far worse

The three visitors, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, sit on the ground in dumb silence.

Job has watched their movements, and now begins to speak in a half soliloquizing chant.

He curses the day he was born, not in wrath but in sorrow. And the stateliness of his words and the orderly procession of his thought inspires admiration. He compares life with death—the tumult of existence with the Nirvana of rest. Surely life of itself is not desirable! Within the grave there is peace

“There the wicked cease from troubling and the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.” And then Job makes the bitter confession—the one thing that prosperous men conceal—that even in his best days he was far from being at peace. “I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came. The thing I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.”

Do we bring upon ourselves the things we fear?

Job's body is sore beset with pain, but his head is all right. He is wiser now than when he was every whit whole. Sickness sometimes is the calling a halt that gives a man time to think.

After a long pause the silence is broken by Eliphaz. Eliphaz is fat, has a good digestion and is delightfully complacent. He is a gentleman and begins his speech with an apology, following with high praise of Job's various achievements. Gifted rhetoricians who intend to smite hard always make this gentle show of giving due credit. A pretense of considering all the mitigating circumstances is very fine, and a man who thus plays his part and plays it well must command our respect. Eliphaz dances an elocutionary minuet and finally reaches the real issue by asking: “Remember, I pray, whoever perished being innocent?”

Of course he does not expect an answer; he has asked the question in order to answer it, and he does. His language is very beautiful, grace dwells upon his lips and his words drop honey. But all the argument he has to present is that the punishment always fits the crime; and that as Job is now being sorely punished, surely his sin must have been very great. He

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reasons a priori and hints at woeful misdemeanors and crimes unnamable, and cautions Job to repent and accept with contrite spirit the chastisement he has brought upon himself.

This is a fascinating doctrine for comfortable men—they clutch it in glee. And it surely contains a goodly glimmer of truth. The fallacy lies in the fact that a man does not necessarily reap as he has sown. We reap as other men have sown—our parents and grandparents and great-grandparents. Our bare and bleeding feet tread the thistles planted by those long dead. I haven't much power, but I have enough to make several hundred people believe this earth is hell. We are heirs to the past—both its good and ill. Each individual man is a molecule of the great life we call mankind. Job knows this and flings it hard at Eliphaz, and declares that he himself has never sinned to merit this awful misery. He calls attention to the fact that Eliphaz has a theory and forces everything to gibe with it. The assumption that Job has committed great crimes is shown only by the fact that he now suffers. And Job says, "On the helpless ye would fall and by your logic dig a pit for your friend." He discusses further on the brevity of life, the weakness of man, the mystery of existence, and ends with a prayer for pardon and peace: "For soon shall I sleep in the dust; in the morning thou shalt seek me, and I shall be no more." The words bear a striking likeness to those of Omar Khayyam: "Open thou the door, you know how little time we have to stay!" Then Bildad makes a few remarks, although he has no message. But he feels that some one should occupy the time. He is another Polonius and voices in a pompous way the things he has memorized. Bildad is no gentleman. He breaks forth on Job thus: "How

long wilt thou utter such things ! the words of thy mouth be a great tempest. If thou wert pure and upright, even now God would arouse himself for thee." ❧❧❧

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Surely Bildad is a type. He rubs salt into the wounds of his friends, and says, "I told you so." Of course he never did—he has hindsight and bad memory and always fetches up the irrelevant and the disjointed. He is one of the men who cough and say loudly in company, "Next to the Bible, Shakespeare is the greatest book ever written,"—having read neither. Nobody disputes a man like that, excepting possibly Polonius himself.

Job makes no reply to Bildad, but begins again to chant of the greatness of God and the marvels of the Universe. It sounds like the sweet singing of a half delirium—the senses stirred to a poetic sublimity by fever ❧

At a hospital not long ago I saw a woman being given an anæsthetic and she sang snatches of a lullaby to a babe that had long been dead. So sings Job. He sings as Ophelia sang, but in his words there are both pathos and reason. He says to God: "Do not condemn me ; show me wherefore Thou contendest with me. Is it a pleasure for Thee to oppress ?"

And finally Zophar feels that he should say something—otherwise he might as well have stayed at home. And Zophar is no gentleman, either ❧ He is a course, bigoted and brutal in his piety. He has gotten things down fine and is perfectly satisfied with his theology, and that Job does not think as he does causes him to blurt out : " Shall not this multiplying of words be answered? or shall a vain babbler be justified? Shall thy vaunting make men silent!" ❧ Zophar must have his say. He has no pity, no sym-

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pathy; he is cruel as the north wind, yet very religious. No new thought has come to him for forty years; he has no doubts. He accuses Job of being a "false man," of being hollow-hearted and declares him "the colt of a wild ass."

Bildad was only an innocent babbler, but this man is really malicious, and Job losing his temper replies with this choice bit of wit: "No doubt but ye are the people and wisdom will die with you!"

And then Job continues to speak in his fever and delirium. And what splendid, suggestive words they are! They show the heart of a philosopher and a poet; a man who has done his best and yet been defeated; but in his defeat he is not cast down—there is defeat and defeat. He accepts his fate and bows before the will of God. He does not know how or where or when, but out of all the mist he believes will yet come light and healing.

Then Eliphaz speaks again, and because Job will not confess his great guilt, grows angry and shouts: "Should a wise man answer with arguments of wind?"

He accuses Job of irreverence and profanity. And so we scratch Eliphaz and find that down underneath he is the same type as Bildad and Zophar—the only difference is that on the surface he shows a little polish: he has been to college. And no wonder that Job exclaims: "I have heard many such things as these—miserable comforters are ye all!"

Had Job been in health instead of being sore stricken with bodily ills, his language would have paralleled that of Ernest Renan, who says, "For my part, I imagine that if the Eternal, in his severity, should send me to the Bad Place, I would succeed in escaping from it; for I would send up to my creator a suppli-

cation that would make him smile. The course of reasoning by which I could prove to him that it was through his own fault that I was damned, would be so subtle he would have difficulty in replying to it."

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LOFTEN go with my good neighbor, the Doctor, to see his patients. He takes me along for consultation. A few months ago we visited a man sick unto death with a sore combination of ills. The report having been given out that the man could not survive, kinsmen came for many miles to offer their services in this time of need. Some of them admonished the man, and praying with him told him to repent and prepare for death. We found a kitchen full of these sympathetic neighbors, all conversing in whispers and tip-toeing through the house in squeaky shoes. Recent orders had been given by the Doctor that no one should talk to the patient, but occasionally some one, more bold than the rest, would come, and standing in the doorway of the chamber, gaze long with solemn lack-lustre eye on the face of the stricken man. And meantime coming from the kitchen was the continued buzz of conversation discussing the chances of recovery and the man's fitness for the great change. When I sat down by the bedside the patient made a feeble motion as if trying to speak. I put my head down close to catch the last message. In a weak, hesitating whisper he asked :

"Who—who are all those damn fools in the kitchen?"

The man got well

I only throw the incident in here because it seems to give a glimpse of a condition that is four thousand years old. It is a combination of events that is classic. And still the three visitors overwhelmed Job with

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words ♣ They insist and insist again that calamity comes not without a cause. They themselves are healthy, happy and prosperous: they have kept the law. Job has n't. All of his protests of innocence go for nothing—they will not have it so. They are like bulldogs that have not sense enough to let go: they have started in with a certain theory and will cling to it and kill Job if they cannot convert him.

In George Eliot's essay on Doctor Cumming the author tells of how this celebrated evangelist was once visited by a man who sought the Great Peace. Doctor Cumming prayed with him, the congregation ♣ prayed for him; the man went forward to the mourners' bench every night for a month. When the invitation to go forward was given he always went, and when sinners were asked to stand he always stood. Still the promised peace never came. At last Doctor Cumming took the man by the elbow, and looking squarely in his face said, "Sir, you are now, and have been, indulging in some awful secret sin—until you confess all, God will never pardon you!"

The man was shocked; he protested and swore his innocence. Doctor Cumming stood firm and stoutly maintained that such unrest of mind was the sure sign of guilt—it was the punishment of God. And the man still protesting was thrust down and out. He was never converted, and the Great Peace was not his portion ♣

But the three visitors speak with a better speech than Doctor Cumming did ♣ They speak with the words that the author of the drama put into their mouths. And like the shepherds and soldiers and servants in Shakespeare's plays, there is in their talk both wit and wisdom: the spirit of the author acts through them. The author of Job has wit to spare

and it leaks through. So in the conversation of all there is a similarity. The entire drama is but a framework on which to hang these questions, dreams, imaginings and splendid reveries.

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And to give still another view a new character is introduced—a youth by the name of Elihu. This young man has come in late and only heard the latter part of Job's last speech ♣ Job has been stung into self-vindication—a thing no man should ever attempt. If men do not comprehend the trend of your life by your actions, they will never know it better by your making a personal explanation. Your life may be right but your reasons never. Life, like love, is its own excuse for being ♣

Now Job has talked too much and as a consequence has gotten himself woefully misunderstood. He has just said: "I was eyes to the blind and feet was I to the lame, I was a father to the poor. . . . No! the stranger did not lodge in the street; my door I opened to the traveller. . . . Behold my vindication! May the Almighty answer me!" ♣ Now this, to Elihu who did not know what had gone before, was rank heresy. It sounded like self exaltation; and the calling upon God to say otherwise if He dare was blasphemy. Young men, ardent and full of zeal, are always coming to the rescue of God. They defend Him heroically. Does anyone speak disrespectfully of the Almighty they rush in as champions protecting His good name and vindicate Him if possible by humiliating the offender. When Jesus forgot Himself so far as to drive the money changers from the temple by force He made the mistake of impeaching His own philosophy. The money changers were all back in the afternoon—doing business at the same old stand ♣ Elihu's spirit boiled to think that anyone

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should question God; with hot words he rebukes Job for daring to doubt the work of Deity, and pours forth a torrent of invective against Job and whitewashes the actions of the Almighty in orotund varied with falsetto. Yet the fact that the entire speech is based upon a misconception does not lessen its excellence. Elihu screams: "Thinkest thou this to be right when thou saidst: ♣ 'My righteousness is more than God's?'" ♣

Job had not said any such thing but that makes no difference to Elihu—he's an orator from Kansas. He continues: "Wait a little while and I will show thee that I have yet arguments on behalf of God! I will bring my knowledge from afar to defend the righteousness of my Maker." There now! And thus young converts are afraid that God shall become ridiculous. They cannot comprehend the difference between criticising their conception of God, and God Himself. All blasphemy laws are based on a misconception. So Elihu talks platitude and truism and lugs in the irrelevant until there is nothing more to say ♣ He tires them all out. No one answers him—they can't! He has shifted the ground and brought up so many points that the listeners are dazed. They are perfectly willing to agree with him on any point, and like Dr. Johnson, who would rather praise the new author's book than read it, the auditors are willing to agree rather than sift the argument.

And thus Elihu ceases and sits down in triumph, having talked the Wise Men to a standstill. But all the time God has been listening. Evidently He feels well able to take care of Himself and has no admiration for Elihu as He now suddenly asks: "Who is this that darkeneth council by speeches without ♣ knowledge?" Then God asks five hundred questions

but does not answer one. And when He has asserted His omnipotence and subdued all, quite after the manner of Elihu, only a little better, He asks Job if he has anything more to say. Job answers: "I will lay my hand upon my mouth, but I will speak no more—a second time I will not do it."

Every man who has been pulled into an argument (and where is the man who has not been pulled into an argument?) thinks less of himself afterward. He has convinced no one. All have listened only to frame a rebuttal. The thing ends where it began.

Then God again speaks and tells of what He has done and boasts of what He will do and challenges all present to do as much if they can. Job apologizes and meekly says: "I know that Thou canst do everything Wherefore, I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

Elihu has an engagement and wisely disappears; Job's wife discreetly keeps out of the way, and Satan is not in sight. The three visitors are there, but on seeing how the thing turns out they are too weak to apologize for their much talking as Job did. God turns to them and exclaims: "My wrath is kindled against thee." And then he passes sentence upon them, just as the villain is always handcuffed and led away at the end of the fifth act: "Therefore take for yourselves seven bullocks and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job must pray for you." And then is heard a ting-a-ling-a-ling; and as the curtain rolls slowly down we see the three Wise Men sneak off to hunt for bullocks and rams. And our satisfaction over their discomfiture is increased when we reflect that probably they will have to buy the live stock from Job.

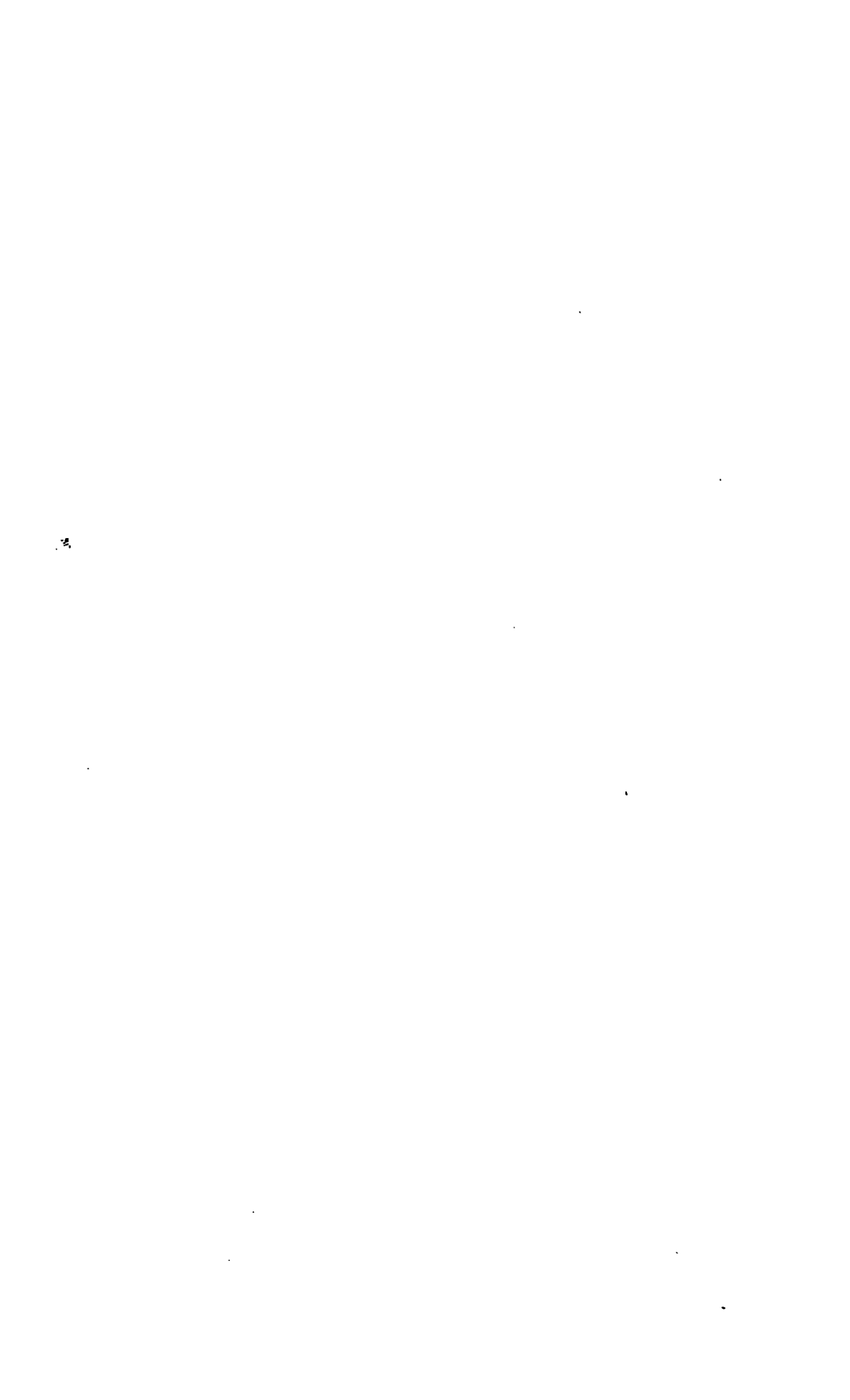
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WE THINK the play is ended & prepare to go, when sounds of music fall on our ears. The curtain rolls up on a beautiful tableau. The stage setting is even more splendid now than when the former feast was held. Job is sitting in the seat of honor, in perfect health. There are music and dancing, and about Job cluster his brothers and sisters and former acquaintances. The wine goes 'round and light and song fill the happy air. We see Job giving to each guest the small coin, Kesitah, that is to bring the fortunate possessor good luck.

You clasp the hand of Her who's your companion, you each look into the other's eyes and both sigh in satisfaction as the curtain falls. So ends the play. But there is a foot note to the libretto to the effect that the Lord blessed the latter days of Job exceedingly, doubling all of his former possessions. There were also given him seven sons and three daughters, and as if the author anticipated some one doubting the truth of his statements, he gives the names of the three daughters. And in all the land no women were so beautiful as the daughters of Job. Then Job died, old and full of days.







THE BIGOTRY BACILLUS

VIII.

THE BIGOTRY BACILLUS.



CIVILIZATION, like success, has its penalty. Granting all the wonders that invention has wrought, and admitting our splendid progress along certain lines, the calm observer still sees that we have bought these things with a price. Have we paid too much?

If you are not in haste, let the future tell.

In civilized countries the state protects the individual, and thus through lack of exercise the individual in time loses the capacity to protect himself. Our forefathers, who wrestled with wind and storm and dared the elements, or faced wild beasts or savage men as wild, laughed at danger. They went into battle with stouter hearts than we take to the dentist's. We are so busy making money and so fearful about the money we have made, so alert and breathless for "facts," that what we have gained in height we have lost in girth.

As a consequence we have acquired a few things beside money and facts. Among these acquisitions are a whole host of diseases—exhaustion, paresis, nervous prostration and various brands of debility; each of which is presided over by many self-appointed specialists (like the gods of old) who offer us "consultation free." Several men have immortalized themselves by palming off on us brand new ailments and naming these diseases after themselves. As the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table has said, "Their names go clattering down the corridors of time like a tin kettle to a dog's tail." Who can conceive of the mischief that Dr. Bright brought about by booming his

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bacilli! Schemes for "self treatment" are thrust at us from the columns of every daily, and as we walk the streets we see in shop windows dainty little plush boxes containing hypodermic outfits, advertised as holiday presents. As we journey by rail announcements of "the only sarsaparilla" and "the kind that cures" greet us from barn roofs that should be sacred to moss and silky grey shingles; we look out to enjoy the landscape, and behold references to "that tired feeling" that give it to us. We take up the paper to read the doings of the great men of the earth, and our eyes light on pictures of worthy housewives who have gained a pound a day—or lost it, as the case may be. Pepsin, hypophosphites, bromide, cocaine, chloral, are sold on every hand. The opium smugglers are making such vast fortunes that they bid fair to rival in society the Coal Oil Johnnies. The latest thing in neurotics is paranoia. No doubt it has always existed, but until a disease becomes popularized, so to speak, it cannot consistently lay claim to a technical name. The distinguishing symptom of this malady is fear. The victim is very sure that some one is plotting against him. He knows it. For many months this fear may be upon him and his intimate friends see nothing wrong in his manner. But he is alert, vigilant and on the lookout. Suddenly some day he sees his wife sprinkle a white powder in his soup. It is salt, but you could never convince him of that fact. He refuses the soup, and his life for the time is spared. Next day he slyly exchanges his cup of coffee for hers. She does not drink all of her coffee—he knows why, but keeps the information to himself. Certain conspirators come to his house in the disguise of rag-peddlers, milkmen, etc.; he sees them and mentally makes note. He observes these

men afterward on the street, but they pretend not to see him: they turn their backs and walk away. He confronts them; they are astonished and protest their innocence—"just as the guilty always do." ♣ The ropes are being drawn tighter around the helpless victim. He sees his children are eyeing him—yes, even they have joined the enemy. A neighbor comes in and assumes a friendliness that he does not feel; it can be seen in his eye. Relentless hate is on the poor fellow's track—ruin, disaster, disgrace, ♣ death. Sleepless nights follow days of hot anxiety, and one of two things happens. The unhappy wretch in frenzy strikes down his wife or son or neighbor who he imagines is about to wrong him, or he flies to a distant city to elude pursuers. Arriving there he detects still other villains on his track; breathless, with bloodshot eyes and blanched face, the cold sweat standing in beads on his forehead, he rushes into a police station and demands protection. He gets it; for every police captain has seen more than one just such case.

It is a well-known fact that when a man is in a condition ripe for suggestion he accepts the thought of another. So paranoia is often known to have its beginning in the suggested hate of some one else. It is possible for a whole family to become affected with the same hallucination. So many instances of this kind are to be found recorded in treatises on nervous disorders that it would be like platitude to give them here ❧❧

An insane idea may run through an entire community, as the hallucination of witchcraft did in Salem in 1692, when nineteen innocent persons were hanged on testimony that was deemed unimpeachable. The witchcraft fear found root in a soil already full of ap-

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prehension. A perusal of Cotton Mather's sermons will quickly show that he taught of a God of wrath who proposed to damn certain people and save others. This God was jealous, petty, trifling, capricious, and could be pacified only by certain things. People who believe in this sort of a Supreme Being have minds ready to be inoculated with any other combination of fear and hate that may be thrust upon them by a strong suggestion. Salem has made a stain on the pages of our history that will last even into the time when the United States of America lives only in legend and fable.

There are now strong symptoms of a social paranoia to be seen in certain parts of our country. If the antidote is not given it may become a scourge that will hold our fair name up as a byword and a hissing before the civilized world. This disease has found a favorable soil in many sections, especially in the rural districts of the West. The widespread financial depression has hit the farmer hard. The rustle of the mortgage has sung in his ears night and day, and visions of a gigantic summons and complaint, backed up with writs of ejectment, have haunted his dreams. And no matter how much they claim that the tears of pity have put out the fires of hell, yet the good old doctrines of "total depravity," "endless punishment" and the angry God are still preached throughout the land. Bad legislation, bad crops and bad theology are a trinity of bad things. The result has been that a condition favorable to a suggestion of hate and fear has been prepared; and the suggestion has come. Several years ago I was visiting an old farmer friend in Illinois, and very naturally the talk was of the World's Fair. Was he going? Not he, he dared not leave his house a single day; did I not know that the

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Catholics had been ordered by the Pope to burn the barns and houses of all heretics? It sounded like a joke, but I saw the grey eyes of this old man flash and I knew he was terribly in earnest. With trembling hands he showed me the pope's encyclical, printed in a newspaper which had a deep border of awful black. I tried to tell this man that Pope Leo XIII was a wise and diplomatic leader and probably the most enlightened man who had been at the head of the Roman church for many years; and by no human probability could he do a thing which would work such injury to the Catholics as well as the rest of humanity. And moreover I gave it as my belief that the encyclical was a clumsy forgery. But my argument was vain. I was taken to the two clergymen in the village, a Presbyterian and a Baptist; both were full of fear and hate toward the Catholics, with a little left over for each other. They were sure that the order to kill and burn had gone forth.



AND so in many towns and villages as I journeyed I found this quaking fear. In many places men were arming themselves with Winchester rifles; many preachers never spoke in public without fanning the flame; A. P. A. lodges were rapidly initiating new members, and lurid literature which was being vomited forth from presses in Louisville, Chicago, Omaha and Kansas City was being sent out broadcast.

I have earnestly endeavored to find proof that the Catholic church in America was arming and drilling men or countenancing such action, as so boldly stated by leaders in the A. P. A. In many cities I have been given permission to search every part of convents, monasteries and churches where arms

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were said to be stored. In vain has been my search. I have used all methods known to detectives to find any Catholic in possession of orders to maltreat his neighbors. No request or suggestion or hint showing a desire to injure Protestants have I ever been able to trace to a Catholic priest, bishop or other dignitary. And it is now the conclusion of all unprejudiced men who have investigated the matter that the letters, "encyclicals," "bulls" and orders which are being printed in various A. P. A. papers and purporting to come from the Roman Catholic church are flagrant forgeries.

The A. P. A. seeks to spread hate; it thrives by fear, and its only weapon is untruth. This broadcast sowing of falsehoods is doubtless done by men who are thriving by it politically and financially, and the real victims are the people who believe these outrageous stories, subscribe for the papers and pay dues to be initiated into the A. P. A. lodges. Yet whenever any one has taken up pen to try to stop the insane panic, he has been greeted as "a Jesuit hireling." Occasionally, however, we get a clear note of protest from strong men: men who have so placed themselves on record in the past that their attitude toward Rome cannot possibly be misunderstood.

As for myself I do not recognize the church of Rome as a "divine institution" any more than I regard the New York Central Railroad as such. I have just as much faith in the infallibility of Chauncy M. Depew as I have in that of the Pope. Both are pretty good men as men go. When they met a few months ago they grasped hands, as all men should—as equals. Among other things Dr. Depew told his Holiness that many of the Central's most faithful and trusted employees were loyal Catholics. And it is a fact that

nearly one-half of the men in the employ of railroads in the United States are communicants in the church of Rome

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Some weeks ago it was my privilege to ride from New York to Albany on the engine of the Empire State express. The engineer was a little, bronzed, weather-beaten man of near fifty. I showed my permit, and without a word he motioned me to the fireman's seat in the cab. He ran around his engine with oil can in hand, then climbed to his place and waited for the conductor's signal to start. I was watching, too, and back in the crowd I saw the hand swung aloft. At the instant, the engineer turned and made a quick motion as if crossing himself, seized the lever, and we were off. For exactly three hours the telegraph poles sped past, and we rolled and thundered onward through towns, villages, cities; over crossings, switches, bridges, culverts and through tunnels and viaducts at that terrific rate of a mile a minute. The little man at the throttle looked straight out ahead at the two lines of glistening steel; one hand was on the throttle, the other ready to grasp the air brake. I was not afraid, for I saw that he was not. He spoke not a word, nor looked at me nor at his fireman, who worked like a Titan. But I saw that his lips kept moving as he still forced the flying monster forward

At last we reached Albany. What a relief it was! My nerves were unstrung. I had had enough for a lifetime. The little engineer had left the cab and was tenderly feeling the bearings. I turned to the fireman: "Bill, why does he keep moving his lips when there at the lever?"

"Who—th' ole man? Why, don't you know, he's a Catholic. He allus prays on a fast run. Twenty years

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he's run on this road with never an accident, never touches a drop of anything—the nerviest man that ever kicked a guage cock, he is, 'swelp me!"

Bill is not a Catholic, neither am I, but we do not ask whether the engineer who pilots us safely to our destination is Presbyterian or Methodist; we only ask that he shall be a man who knows his business and is willing to do it. And yet the A. P. A. are clamoring for the removal of all Catholics from the employ of railroad companies; and their oath of initiation requires that the candidate shall never give employment to a Catholic provided a Protestant can be found to do the work.

It is a somewhat curious thing that this hatred and insane fear of Rome is almost entirely confined to orthodox Protestantism. The Quakers, Universalists, Unitarians, liberals of all sorts and the "infidels" are not alarmed. But a reference to A. P. A. papers will show a fine array of names of orthodox clergymen who are "waging the war." And the more orthodox they are the fuller of fight they seem. "High church" talks extermination of Catholicism, but "low church" is not panic-stricken.

The persecutor and the martyr are of the same type. And in this case it is brother against brother—a family feud. The orthodox Protestant brother who is so busy organizing A. P. A. lodges is made from the same stuff as the hated Catholic. They are both "Christians" and both "sincere." The distinguishing feature in the religion of each is that they teach that Jesus of Nazareth did not have a man for his father, and that only by a certain belief in this Jesus can we escape perdition.

Show an Eskimo three horses, a black, a grey and a bay, and he can scarcely see any points of resem-

blance in them. But a skillful horseman will quickly detect that the conformation, temper and quality of endurance in each is about the same—in fact that they may all have had the same sire and dam. If you are selecting one of these horses for your own use, the expert judge will tell you to take your choice: they are all of one breed—it is only a matter of taste in color. So it is with these man-made religions, for all formulated, organized institutions of every sort and kind are man-made. Calvinism, High Church Episcopalianism and Rome are all cut off from the same piece of cloth.

As It
Seems
To Me

They all teach a mixture of superstition and morality with a dash of universal truth, but this latter is not always insisted on. They have all persecuted and cried "Whoa" and "Stop thief" to progress. Art has suffered at the hands of Protestantism, science has been checked and thwarted by all, and on the hands of each is the blood of innocent men. Yet their purpose is to do good. And I believe they do do good.

We know the excellent work of the Jesuits among the Indians: we know the lives of La Salle and Marquette. We know Francis of Assisi, Augustine and the priests who have given their all to leper colonies and still other leper colonies scourged by vice and sin. Then we know of the splendid work of that army of women who toil without pay and who labor without hope of earthly reward in hospitals, asylums—wherever tender hands are needed. On battle-fields where "Christians" have gone forth to kill each other, their white flag of peace is always seen. They whisper words of comfort to the dying, they close the eyes of the dead, they straighten the stiffening limbs, and by their presence lend a show of decency to the last sad scenes.

**As It
Seems
To Me**

Then we know the good work of the Protestants. We know their Chautauqua circles, the Society of Christian Endeavor, the W. C. T. U., the College Settlements, the Asylums, Hospitals and Homes. Catholic and Protestant alike pray to one God, and He who hears the prayer of the nun as she watches by the bedside of the dying, hearkens also to the cry of the Protestant mother

The light of reason has recently sent gleams of glorious truth through all religions. All are coming nearer together, and in many sections we see the dawning of a better day by the uniting of Christian people for practical progress. So be it. But we can go forward only as we leave hate behind. Let Protestants, Catholics and lovers of truth everywhere be willing to strike hands for good, and let us say as a united people, that in this glorious land there is no room

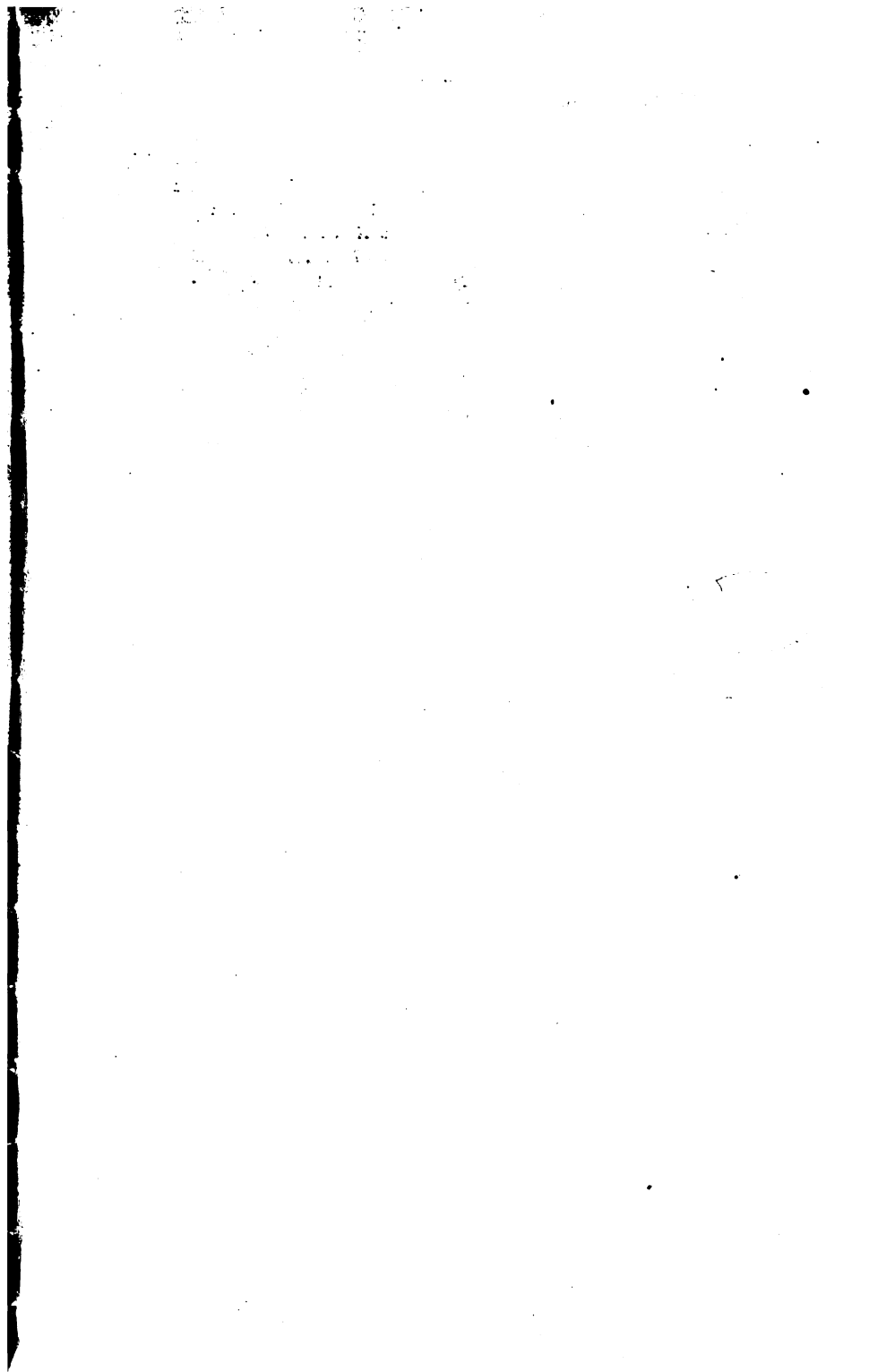
for a secret society that seeks to spread broadcast hate and fear! For if we sow hate we must reap hate. We awaken in others the same attitude of mind that we hold toward them.

“With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.”

SO HERE ENDETH THE BOOK, AS IT SEEMS TO ME:
BEING SOME PHILISTINE ESSAYS WRITTEN
BY ELBERT HUBBARD AND DONE INTO
A BOOK AT THE ROYCROFT SHOP
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